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SPHERES OF RESPONSIBILITY

MOST of the press has treated the alarms and excursions round the Falkland Islands and on the frontier of British Honduras as welcome light relief with which to divert minds oppressed by the tragedy of Europe. The Colonel Blimp who conceals himself in a corner of most British hearts has been stirred by the vision of our soldiers and sailors "showing the flag" in the heart of the American empire, and of cruisers in the Antarctic protecting our loyal whales. When the present is too dismal to be looked at continuously, it is pleasant to re-live the past even in the form of *opera bouffe*.

But the relations of Britain with the republics of Central and Southern America have their serious side. It would be silly to dispute the strength of pan-American xenophobia, or the resentment at European claims to Antarctica and at the continued existence of a few insignificant European colonies on the American mainland. These feelings are genuine and passionate, and the decline of Britain's imperial position made it inevitable that sooner or later certain Latin-American politicians would look with greedy eyes at Honduras and the Falkland Islands. Throwing the mantle of Palmerston about his shoulders, Mr. Bevin dispatches cruisers to the scene of rebellion and scotches any plans for illegal seizure. But the long-term issue remains.

What is remarkable in the whole affair is the inscrutable silence of the State Department. The United States of America has assumed the chief responsibility for maintaining law and order throughout the American continent. American economic interests control the whole life of Guatemala; and even Argentina and Chile, though refractory partners in the pan-American union, are as dependent on America for their armaments as the Arab League is on Great Britain. It seems strange that at a time when the State Department asks Britain to carry the whole weight of political and military responsibility for the defence of American interests in the Middle East, the U.S.A. should be so slow in performing reciprocal services for the United Kingdom within the area of the Monroe Doctrine. Or can it be that Mr. Bevin, before sending the cruisers out on their dramatic mission, neglected to impress on Mr. Marshall his obligations towards us?

To ask these questions is to raise the whole thorny business of Anglo-American military relations, and of the function of our forces in imperial defence, which has been thrashed out in debates on the Service Estimates. Have we become so much an American satellite that we are willing to provide the first line of defence for the United States, whatever her policy, in Western Europe, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, the African Continent, Ceylon and Malaya?

Obviously the situation demands a realistic re-assessment of the division of labour in relation to defence between all the Powers, not only between America and the nations of Western Europe, but also between America and Russia. Given a clear understanding on spheres of interest, there is hope that the ideological conflict may not lead to war. There is no clash of material interests between America and Russia, and they may yet reach working agreements. As between Britain and America the present position is absurd. Britain cannot continue to sustain all her scattered imperial commitments and at the same time play a major role in giving effect to the policy of containing the whole Soviet bloc on exterior lines. Either task is beyond our strength. Together they make strategic nonsense.

The Economic Survey

The authors of the White Paper on Britain's economic situation and prospects are to be congratulated on the excellent job they have done in succinct, lucid and factually honest exposition; and the simplified version, with its admirably clear pictorialisation of the key statistics, is a marked improvement on last year's effort at "popularisation." The Survey represents, of course, not so much a positive plan for overcoming the crisis as an objective assessment of probabilities. On the whole, the revised estimates of production and overseas trade seem realistic; but, particularly in the case of textiles, it must be recognised that they depend essentially on an assumed re-deployment of man-power, for whose achievement no fresh practical steps are proposed. It will not be forgotten how seriously the 1947 man-power predictions were falsified.

In a leading article we examine the material given in the White Paper with the particular object of inquiring what would have to be done if there were no further American credits made available to us. The Survey, however, makes it plain that the Government is assuming that American aid in some form will arrive. Indeed, for the benefit of hesitant Congressmen, there is considerable stress laid on the argument that, without Marshall aid, Britain would have to take steps which "would diminish greatly the support which the United Kingdom could give to European reconstruction." The public is rightly warned that the receipt of further relief from the United States must not be used as an excuse for continuing to live beyond our means.

> On no account must such aid be used merely to provide us with greater ease or comfort. It must be used rather to sustain our working strength and efficiency, while we develop those new sources of supply at home, in the sterling area, and elsewhere, which will enable us to stand on our own feet when the period of aid is finished.

Remembering the arguments used to justify the 1946 Dollar Loan, cynics may say: "This is where we came in"; but we are confident that, this time, with Sir Stafford Cripps in control, the dangers of using American credits as a mere palliative will be avoided.

The Paris Conference

There is an obvious danger lest the purposes of the European Economic Conference which meets in Paris next week become confused as a result of the proceedings at other conferences which have preceded it. The Three-Power talks in London on the future of Germany were inconclusive. Agreement was reached on the proposition that the constitution of Western Germany should be federal; but the question of international control of the Ruhr (for which the French were still pressing) was left open, and so was the issue whether the French Zone should be merged in Bizonia. From the Brussels Conference between Britain, France and the Benelux Union there seems likely to emerge a comprehensive Security Pact, if not, indeed, a formal military alliance. It is to be hoped, however, that the protagonists at the Paris Conference will realise that they are not meeting to discuss the differences between the French and the Anglo-American view on the political control of Germany, and still less the extension to other States of the strategic tie-up on which Britain, France and the Low Countries have seemingly decided to embark. If that item were included on the agenda, the Scandinavian countries and Switzerland would be only too likely to leave the Conference altogether. The purpose of the Paris meeting should be to concert economic measures for ensuring that the Marshall Plan is so utilised by Western Europe that, when American aid comes to an end, the Sixteen Nations will be as nearly as possible an economically independent group, with their balances of foreign payments in reasonable equilibrium.

The World Food Situation

This year's harvest ought to ease the world food shortage. The problem of dollar shortage remains, but crop prospects are most encouraging. The United States, instead of having 150 million bushels, is likely to harvest 200 million bushels. Canada, Australia and the Argentine are all likely to have bumper crops. The conditions of physical scarcity—one factor which necessitated bread rationing—may soon give way to abundance, limited only by financial stringency. These considerations obviously dictated the successful outcome—after 15 years of negotiations—of the International Wheat Agreement. Thirty-six countries are parties to this agreement—Russia and Argentine abstaining—the first without explanation and the second because it conflicts with its own economic plans. The Argentine may find itself in difficulties, since it is calculating on a scarcity situation which will not exist. Britain, which is the major grain importing nation, would not sign the agreement last year, because it would not accept the maximum price of 1½ dollars a bushel. It has now agreed to a ceiling price of 2 dollars, with a minimum of 1½ dollars for the current year, declining to 1.1 dollars in the fifth year. The agreement was probably facilitated by the lesson given by the rocketing wheat prices in the U.S. market last year, when the price topped 3 dollars a bushel. This agreement stabilises prices on the same principle as Orr proposed for his World Food Board—by buying at the minimum and selling when speculation forces prices above the agreed limit. Once the world has emerged from the bread grain famine situation, cereals will be once again available for the feeding of livestock and increasing the animal meat and fat supplies. The new agreement means that farmers can now plan ahead to meet human needs without any deterrent of threatened "over-production."

Labour Party Agenda

The agenda for the Labour Party's Whitsuntide Conference consists mostly of resolutions drawn up some time ago, and therefore fails to reflect the consequences of the *coup* in Czechoslovakia or the latest developments of the debate about incomes and prices. These matters will be dealt with in the amendments which affiliated bodies are now entitled to submit, or in Executive resolutions put forward at a later stage. It is the more significant that a high proportion of the 300 resolutions that have been sent in have to do with one aspect or another of the wages-prices-profits controversy, including such closely related issues as food subsidies, purchase tax, and the machinery of distribution. Special taxation of profits, a levy on capital, and restrictions on dividend distribution are among the proposals put forward. The General and Municipal Workers ask the Conference to endorse the maintenance of voluntary methods of wage-negotiations, while the Transport and General Workers express disbelief in the efficacy of voluntary limitation of profits. Other "home front" resolutions deal with the need to raise pensions to meet the higher cost of living, with the administration and costs of socialised services (including the personnel and the high rates of salary of the new Boards and Corporations), and with "equal pay," about which it is complained that no action has been taken of last year's Conference recommendations. The agenda also includes demands for public ownership of iron and steel, shipbuilding, land, and industrial assurance services, and also a proposal to limit compensation to cases of "hardship." A large group of resolutions calls for stronger measures against Fascist activity. On foreign policy there is, as might be expected, an all-out critical resolution from Gateshead, balanced by an equally forthright "pro-Bevin" resolution from the National Union of Mineworkers. The remaining resolutions dealing with foreign policy are mostly critical of the Government, either generally or on particular issues. Finally, East Lewisham—Mr. Herbert Morrison's constituency—asks the Conference to decide that its policy decisions shall be binding upon the Government.

Labour and the Next Election

The publication of the Labour Party discussion pamphlet, *Public Ownership—The Next Step*, has considerable political significance. It is the second to be issued as a sounding board for decisions on the domestic programme at the next General Election. Coming after a two-and-a-half-year period of nationalisation, it is a valuable restatement of the case for Socialism and will clear up some of the confusion of thinking about nationalisation that at present exists among Labour supporters. It is encouraging, as an indication of the direction that Transport House's political strategy is taking, that it does not accept as the test for the success of a nationalised industry the Tory yardstick of the profit made by that industry. Rather it insists on the criterion whether the power of the people over their own destinies is increased by any particular act of nationalisation, and admits immediate financial profit as only a secondary consideration. On that basis the pamphlet selects those centres of our economy which most affect the rest of industry as being first on the list for nationalisation by the next Parliament. The top priority is given to industries which are basic as suppliers to other industries and which are essential to human life, health, or defence. Then come monopolies, followed by inefficient industries and the investors of capital on a large scale. The final consideration is for those industries suffering from bad relations between workers and managements. It is thus hoped that greater and more essential production, together with a more equal standard of life, can be achieved; and that the chances of maintaining full employment can be increased. The pamphlet does not ignore the need to make further nationalisation attractive, particularly by the extension of workers' control. At the same time it courageously brings the Movement up against the difficulties of gradual nationalisation in an economy of which four-fifths is still in private hands.

"Independent and Sovereign"

A few weeks ago it was regarded as almost certain that the new Constitution of India would make her a Dominion within the Commonwealth. Doubt arose because all politically minded Indians were deeply wounded by the failure of the British delegation at Uno to support their appeal over Kashmir. They accept the genuine effort of Uno to achieve a general settlement between India and Pakistan, but they bitterly complain that their legal case was not even seriously considered. We believe, however, that India will still stay within the Commonwealth. After all, why not stay in a Commonwealth in which, as Nehru has just remarked (with the example of Eire in mind), it is possible to be a Dominion and at the same time "a completely independent and sovereign republic or Commonwealth."

PARLIAMENT : Naval Occasion

Wednesday

While the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty was surveying the condition of the Navy, Churchill sat brooding in his place. Not even when Dugdale ventured to teach him a "simple lesson" about the numerical relationship of men to ships did he pay more attention than a senior buffalo to a gadfly. Churchill had his eye on the Minister of Defence. He rose, swished Dugdale a compliment; and charged, hell-belly, at Alexander. "Silly," "fraudulent," "the quintessence of asininity," and "ghastly folly" were some of his attributes to Alexander's administration. As punishment for poor value and improperly advertising naval weakness, he recommended the Minister to take a prolonged holiday.

Alexander picked himself up, dusted himself down, and began a somewhat deferential eulogy of his former chief. Labour back-benchers groaned; they weren't in the mood for unction. At that, Alexander changed course—he was about to do so, anyhow—and gave Churchill a Churchill for his Churchill. In a short but vigorous speech, he made it clear that if a South American republic or anyone else invited a visit from a task-force, it would promptly get it.

The rest of the debate on Naval Estimates divided itself on traditional lines between the sailors like Marsden, Taylor and Galbraith, and the representatives of the dockyards like Lucy Middleton, Foot and Bruce. The Tories have always been able to draw for their speakers on those who have held commands. In the present Parliament, Labour has at least three ex-naval officers, Mallalieu, Levy and Pursey, who began on the lower deck. No one in the House knows more about the Navy than Pursey, and it was a pity that, contrary to his hope, he was unable to rebut Churchill immediately, and was only called after midnight to express his confidence in the Navy's present power. Together with Mallalieu, Paget and Shawcross, he gave symmetry to a debate which otherwise would have been unduly weighted on the side of the Navy League.

During both the Naval and the Army discussions, Russia, an inscrutable stranger, sat listening and observed. In preparing for a fight, it is always convenient to measure one's opponent. Hitherto, discretion and good manners have prevented Russia from being named as a potential enemy. Now that public inhibition has disappeared. Britain's armed force is assessed in relation to Russia's military strength.

Accepting that standard, Shinwell showed in his Army Estimates debate that he has tried to make the Army as efficient and happy as his means allow him. After he had given a well-received account of the state of the Army and of his work at the War Office, he had the rather embarrassed look of the bounder of the Remove who suddenly becomes the most popular boy at Saint Stephen's. At any rate, he eyed Winterton and Moore warily as they brought him laurel wreaths. He obviously wasn't sure whether they were intended for his brow or his tomb. But it is not surprising that Shinwell should be as popular with the troops as he was with the miners. He believes that human beings matter. For the Tories, Winterton, whose knowledge of the Territorial Army is unrivalled, asked the War Minister what he called some "searching questions." With his acrobatic style, Winterton is always a pleasure to watch, as he hops, skips and jumps from theme to theme.

The Army Estimates give the opportunity of raising a hundred and one detailed and general grievances. Among the day's best speeches was that of Keeling, who gave a comprehensive account of what ought and ought not to be done for the Territorial Army. Sidney Shephard followed him with the interesting suggestion from a Tory that the Territorial Association needed more public relations officers and less civic cocktail parties.

Both the Naval and Army Debates have shown that in matters of defence the Parties have not adopted separate positions. The Pacifists were silent. And the House listened to the talk of guided missiles from obsolete battleships and of bombs exploded in the air or below the sea, with as little emotion as it might have heard a report on the British Railways. The atom bomb, spreading a deadly fungus over cities and making sunset of high-noon, still seems as far away as Hiroshima.

Maurice Edelman

IF THERE WERE NO DOLLARS

Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Harry Pollitt have one article of faith in common. Divided, as they are, by mountains of political partisanship and a waste of ideological seas, they both behold in dreams the Hebridean vision of a Britain stoutly declining proffered Marshall Plan dollars and yet standing on her own feet without grave difficulty. Here the resemblance between the attitude of the *Daily Worker* and that of the *Express* group of newspapers ends. The Communists imply that the problem of doing without dollars could be solved more or less painlessly by substituting imports from the Soviet Union and the Eastern democracies of Europe for the supplies from the Western hemisphere on which we have hitherto relied; but, though they may not emphasize the concomitant need for radical adjustments in Britain's economy, they would presumably admit that they are making the tacit assumption that Britain, self-excluded from E.R.P., would have to adopt a system of totalitarian Socialist planning—a system which they regard as an objective to be pursued on any ground. Moreover, they do not pretend that, without further dollar credits, it would be possible to maintain anything like the present scale of Britain's armed forces. Lord Beaverbrook, on the other hand, while urging his readers to abjure the temptations of further dollar aid, has cheerfully incorporated "Britain Must Be Strong" among his current slogans. Relying on resources to be obtained largely within the Empire, he appears to assume that Britain and the sterling area can achieve self-sufficiency without assistance from Mr. Marshall and without the necessity of making any further departures from the principles of free enterprise dear to his Lordship's heart.

What are the facts, or rather the probabilities? Though it does not examine this question in great detail, the *Economic Review for 1948* provides the material from which some of the answers can be inferred. If we are to maintain an import programme representing, in volume, 75 per cent. of the 1938 level—and even with this programme we shall not be quite so well off, either in foodstuffs or raw materials, this year as we were in 1947—the cost in foreign exchange will be about £1,670 millions. The net deficit on "invisibles" is put at £80 millions—assuming that gross Government expenditure overseas is maintained at about £190 millions. Hence, if the United Kingdom balance of payments on current account (setting aside the considerable dollar deficit forecast for the rest of the sterling area) were to be brought into equilibrium, we should have to achieve exports of £1,750 millions. The highest estimate of our probable exports which the Government feels justified in making is £1,500 millions—leaving an overall deficit of £250 millions.

This is bad enough in itself; but the situation is rendered the more critical not merely by reason of the rest of the sterling area's dollar deficiency, which is put at £76 millions for the first half of the year, but by reason also of the size of Britain's own deficit with the Western Hemisphere. To it we hope to export this year £235 millions' worth of goods, but we should have to pay £534 millions (or rather their dollar equivalent) for our imports from it, if the programme for the first half-year were maintained throughout 1948. For the first half of the year alone the deficit with the Western Hemisphere is put at £183 millions, including a net deficit of £21 millions on "invisible" account. Moreover, even this result is being achieved only by the almost complete stoppage of purchases of food from the United States. By midsummer, allowing for the needs of the whole sterling area, our gold reserve will have fallen by about £225 millions, to £450; and at this rate would reach the irreducible minimum before the end of the year.

What conclusions can be drawn? First, failing Marshall Aid, there would have to be an immediate drastic cut in imports. Even if we assume that something could be lopped off Government expenditure abroad by abandoning some military commitments, and that other members of the sterling area agreed to be more strictly rationed in dollars, it would still be impossible to sustain a £1,670-million import programme. Since any material reduction in the volume of imports of raw materials, costing £280 millions in the present half-year, would be quickly and disastrously reflected in unemployment and loss of production for export, the economies would have to be made in the projected expenditure of £780 millions annually on imported food and the £250 millions annual bill for imports classed as "manufactured" but comprising, in fact, many articles entering into Britain's industrial processes. It seems doubtful whether this last category of imports could be cut by more than 10 per cent. without serious repercussions on British factory employment; hence, if we assume that it were necessary to knock a total of £200 millions off the bill for imports, there would have to be a cut of over 20 per cent. in imports of foodstuffs. Even so, supplies of various essential commodities—U.S. copper, Canadian nickel, etc.—would be hard to obtain and, according to the *Survey*, might have to be reduced by as much as one-fifth.

This reduction in food supplies—and, unless Canada and the Argentine sought, for their farmers' sake, and obtained dollar credits from the United States, the cuts might temporarily have to be even heavier—would mean for the British people a decline in the daily intake of calories which would cripple "heavy workers," by hand or brain. There would have to be a sharply differentiated rationing system, under which persons not productively occupied would have their rations scaled down to the level, at best, which has prevailed in Western Germany since the war.

Such a situation could not be endured for long. The lines on which remedial action would have to be taken are twofold. On the one hand, an increase in home-produced supplies of food would have to be achieved with the urgency of a military operation. There could be no more talk of mere cash incentives to stimulate easy-going farmers; still less could any plea of shortage of land-workers be tolerated. Targets for tillage and crops would have to be enforced with the full sanctions of State compulsion, and there would equally have to be compulsory recruitment of a force of land workers, if voluntary enrolment failed to provide sufficient numbers. On the other hand, the re-orientation of British trade away from the dollar countries of the Western Hemisphere to countries in the Commonwealth and Eastern Europe would have to take place not gradually, as the Government appears at present to intend, but swiftly—and successfully.

At best, the replacement of essential supplies from the dollar area by imports which could be equated by exports of British goods would take time, and there would be various large uncertainties in the process. Much has to be done before the various schemes of African development now in hand mature; and it is by no means easy to estimate the size of the export surpluses which can be produced in, say, two years' time by the Soviet Union and other countries in Eastern Europe. What is certain, however, is that the expansion of planned bilateral trade with these countries is incompatible with the maintenance in Britain of private enterprise in export selling. Not merely would there have to be a State Corporation which would negotiate all important sales of exports and assure deliveries; the fact would also have to be faced that much of the production on which Britain has so far continued to rely consists of goods for which there is no market in the countries that, we are now assuming, would be in future our chief suppliers. Briefly, there would have to be a drastic curtailment of the manufacture of many high-priced consumer goods, and much greater emphasis would have to be placed on the production of capital goods, the products of the steel and engineering industries. It is difficult to see how the adjustment could be effected without an exceedingly wide extension of State ownership and rigid State control, combined with resolute direction of labour; and, at least temporarily, we should almost certainly have to face widespread unemployment until steel production was expanded.

It comes, then, to this: if Britain were to choose the "hard way," and dispense with Marshall Aid, the crisis which would confront us would be insoluble except in terms of totalitarian planning and, for some years at least, a much lower standard of living. Measures would perforce have to be taken of which Mr. Harry Pollitt would doubtless approve, but which would be highly repugnant to the *laissez-faire* conceptions of Lord Beaverbrook. That Britain, in default of E.R.P. credits, would go under, that the prospect would be one of utter dislocation and anarchy, is by no means certain. There is still, in this country, much "slack" in the form of waste and unnecessary consumption which could be taken up; and, if refusal of Marshall Aid were "put over" as an essential factor in a policy aimed at moving with much greater vigour and determination in the direction of a Socialist Britain, it is conceivable that the response of organised labour might be some compensatory improvement in what is to-day a grave weakness in Britain's economy—production per man-hour. Yet, on the most favourable assumptions, it is idle to pretend that economic independence from the United States could be achieved without sacrifices for which the British people are totally unprepared and the wholesale abandonment of the "gentle" planning on which the British Government has so far had to rely.

DÜSSELDORF—1948

I last visited Düsseldorf in 1930. A dynamic, self-confident city, without much history; Catholic but progressive; South German but with a strong dose of northern thoroughness. Tourists avoided it, believing it to be yet another Ruhr horror of smoke-stacks and slag-heaps. But Düsseldorf was a Rhine city, the home of an artists' colony, and the business headquarters of the iron and steel magnates. It was the brain, not the hands, of German heavy industry.

Coming back after eighteen years, I got my first sight of Düsseldorf as I crossed the Skagerrak bridge, the first Rhine bridge to be rebuilt by German effort. From a distance the lovely river front seemed intact; and, as I drove through the *Hofgarten*, I noticed that, unlike the *Tiergarten* in Berlin, it has retained most of its trees. By German standards, Düsseldorf was lucky: only forty-five per cent. of its buildings were totally destroyed, and its population has swollen from the 185,000, who were left after the fighting, to close on 500,000. For Düsseldorf to-day is the capital of the new *Land*, formed by attaching part of the old Rhine Province to Westphalia. This has created an appalling housing programme owing to the demands of British and German officials—the C.C.G. staff occupies 5,000 units of living space, quite apart from offices and clubs. But the Düsseldorfers are prepared to swallow this inconvenience, since the new importance of their city makes it almost certain that it will in future surpass its ancient competitor, Cologne.

Strange that people who since January 1st had received no ration of fats, meat or potatoes, could discuss civic plans on a diet of dry bread and vegetables cooked in water; that a business centre could still have ambitions in the midst of industrial paralysis, and that city fathers, beset by the problems of sheer survival, could build the best operatic ensemble in Western

Germany. Apparently the life instinct is inextinguishable. In the Municipal Hospital I talked to the doctor in charge of the maternity ward. Yes, he was keeping the figures of infant mortality down, but what was he to do without new bed-linen? Mothers had to bring their own, and his allocation of nappies had sunk to 60 a month. In the absence of washing soap, chemicals have to be used which destroy the worn linen. Beyond the laundry, I walked into a room where wrinkled dames with steel spectacles were darning the tattered rags which go by the names of sheets and towels. In most other countries the struggle would have been abandoned, but here the sewing machines clicked away.

I found the same spirit in the housing department of the Town Hall. Every cubic foot of living space is rationed, including the huge windowless *bunkers*. By refusing to supply them with ration cards, the council tries to deter immigrants. But they stream into the city and I watched the harassed officials dealing with long queues. They work from 8 till 5, eating their lunch at their desks among the shuffling applicants. Here is an old engineer who has walked from Jena, in the Russian Zone. Why had he come to Düsseldorf? Because he had lived there till 1938. Why had he left Jena? Because his room had been requisitioned. What did he intend to do? Work, of course. How old was he? "Seventy-five. But I can set up shop again on my own." The old man laughs, the official laughs, the queue laughs. Application granted.

You think, at first, that these people are all right. But the next case is a war widow of thirty who looks fifty. While she tells how she has been threatened with eviction, she bursts into violent weeping. The mood of the queue is transformed, and you realise how close to mass hysteria this people is. They keep up appearances, but the breaking point is never far off. A woman may bear the most intolerable hardships, and break down suddenly because she has not a reel of mending cotton. But by and large what impresses one is the amazing determination to go on behaving as though things would one day return to the norm under which respectability makes sense. Back in London after four days and nights of endless conversations, I felt exhausted but also exhilarated, and I could understand the remark of a senior British officer. "Since I came here three years ago, my view of the Germans has changed. I can't help feeling proud of my Düsseldorf people."

Seen from Düsseldorf, British policy seems mad. It looks almost as though we had deliberately tried to introduce every disincentive to recovery. Most wages and prices are still fixed at the 1938 level under the Nazi *Lohnstop*. If the peasant markets his potatoes at the controlled price, he cannot afford to buy the fertiliser. If the worker tries to live on his money wages, he starves. Everyone must get "compensation." While I was there, a strike took place in a factory which makes cobblers' tacks. The demand was not for higher wages, but that the "compensation" should be increased from 5 to 10 kilos of tacks per man per week. It may be difficult to sell a sack of tacks, but they are more valuable than Marks. One consequence of the barter system is widespread corruption. The civil servant and the bank clerk must get their "compensation" too.

Currency reform is in the air. Everybody purports to know the full details of the Frankfurt plan for devaluing the Mark, imposing a capital levy, and re-assessing wages and prices. But this sort of reform will be completely ineffective unless it restores political confidence. Will it do so? The Russians, through the S.E.D., have replaced the Nazis with another authoritarian regime. The Germans may hate the Russians, but they understand the system—and so it works. In our zone, by the famous Directive 57, issued in January of last year, we knocked out the foundations of military government—the ultimate responsibility of the British official—without really handing over to the Germans. Quite wrongly, we have talked about German responsibility without making it a reality. "Indirect authoritarianism" gets the worst of both worlds.

Most of the British and the Germans with whom I talked agreed about this. At present neither the C.C.G. nor the Germans feel themselves responsible. The C.C.G. say, "We are only here to advise and in the last resort to veto." The Germans reply: "Advice from someone who holds all the ultimate power is a command. We are worse off than when military government *was* government."

Another consequence of our half-hearted devolution of responsibility is the growth of a lunatic separatism. Each *Land* has its own German government but, since responsibility above this level has been retained by the occupying Powers, German politics has degenerated into bickers between the *Länder*, each trying to retain what resources it possesses and demanding sanctions against its neighbours. Before we decide that federalism is the right long-term solution, we should look at the chaos it has so far produced.

I asked German politicians of all parties whether the formation of a provisional government at Frankfurt would be desirable. A Right-wing Catholic, who began the conversation by saying that a war with Russia was inevitable, was the only unconditional supporter of a provisional government. He also believed that the economic crisis could be solved simply by abolishing controls and permitting each German *Land* to manage its own exports and imports. I was not surprised to hear that, before the war, he had been the Berlin representative of a peasant league. No wonder that thoughtful Socialists are anxious lest the Frankfurt government should fall under the domination of such men. In that case, the agricultural *Länder* would continue to starve the industrial areas, the socialisation of coal and steel would be indefinitely postponed, and the trade unions, which have so far shown great restraint, might be driven into the arms of the Communists. These fears may explain the strongly pro-British attitude of the Socialists. Faced with a permanent C.D.U. majority in Western Germany, and knowing full well the American penchant for federalism and free enterprise, they see their only hope in a British control strong enough to compensate for their electoral weakness. They admitted to me that men like Arnold, the Prime Minister, who leads the Left wing of the C.D.U., would be Socialists in Britain, but they fear that without a strong and continuing British influence behind the scenes they would not be able to deal with their reactionary colleagues in a Frankfurt government.

I saw their point when I went to an informal party with a group of industrialists. We sat round in the faded splendour of a bourgeois flat and were served with coffee and cakes by a butler in tails and a trim housemaid. My hosts behaved like unemployed steel magnates hired to play the part of steel magnates in a second-rate film. A monocled gentleman on my left told me that the iron and steel control was being bolshevised under the noses of the British. My host, on the right, took the occasion to explain that he had been maligned. When he invited Hitler to address the Industrialists' Club in 1931, it was only in order to balance a Socialist who had spoken at the previous meeting. Only Thyssen had subscribed money, and no one else had clapped Hitler, who had not been invited to the usual dinner afterwards. Smooth and entirely unrepentant, these men are biding their time. A weak German government at Frankfurt, dominated by the Right of the C.D.U., would suit them pretty well.

But it is too late to turn the clock back. On that everyone seemed to be agreed. There must be a central German authority at Frankfurt, and it must have real powers. But I came away convinced that it will fail unless we and the Americans make up our own minds what we want. In particular, we must decide whether German heavy industry is a dangerous competitor with our own or an essential complement to it.

This of course is the real issue. Does Western Union need the Ruhr for recovery, or are the 30,000 Germans still employed on demolition destroying what is merely a menace to our security? Steel has replaced coal as the chief bottleneck in Britain. Yet we could obtain the steel which we need from Germany if the coal were available in the Ruhr. And if we are, as we should be, opposed to an exclusive German control of the Ruhr, why do we not, along with Germany's other neighbours, exploit the plants *in situ* instead of trying to move them a couple of hundred miles across a frontier?

It looks to the visitor in Düsseldorf as though our policy in Germany is still a hangover from pre-Marshall and pre-Western Union days. In the long run, we can only solve the security problem by bringing Western Germany within our common planned economy and submitting it to controls and inroads on national sovereignty which we are also imposing on ourselves. In the short run we can save the Germans from starvation and ourselves from bankruptcy by using Ruhr steel to make up for the steel which America is unable to provide under E.R.P. Why do we hesitate? Perhaps because Ernest Bevin has not found time for a week-end in Düsseldorf or in any other German city.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

A LONDON DIARY

JAN MASARYK's suicide is a terrible and significant tragedy. By nature and upbringing he was a Western democrat, and it is very possible that he felt that he could have done more to resist Communist pressure, and blamed himself for not doing so. He would have been very sensitive indeed to criticisms in some English newspapers, which suggested that in accepting the Communist *coup* he had been disloyal to his father's memory. The son of a very great father begins life with an impossible handicap. Jan was an able man who would have been a brilliant success in many walks of life. But, as he once confessed to me, he was always unable to escape from playing parts which were expected of his father's son. He created for himself a gay, jocular, almost cynical, exterior. He was always laughing at himself and so got the reputation of a playboy. He was an admirable speaker, and the most witty of conversationalists. He could have been, I should say, a first-class actor. I recall a speech he made at a lunch given in honour of his friend Karel Capek. It was a masterpiece of artistry; the cleverest mixture of the humorous and the tragic. When I visited him in the Czernin Palace last summer, he began by telling me how much he was embarrassed by a mansion where he was sometimes compelled to entertain several hundred guests. He laughingly described the horrors of such entertainment, and after dinner took me into the room where he did his work and spent his life. It was small, with a bed and a telephone in one corner, a writing-table and some books opposite. What particular misery led him to throw himself from the window we may or may not learn. But the conflict in his mind is easy enough to understand. It is inescapable for all those who have been brought up to love liberty and who find themselves poised between Communism and reaction. In his case the conflict was increased by his passionate loyalty to his country, and by his steady preference for the Russians to the Germans, whom, like all Czechs, he believed to be the real menace to his country. But he could never have been anybody's stooge, and like many other Czech Liberals and Socialists to-day, he must have realised with bitter intensity that to go with the Communists meant to be absorbed in a system from which individual ethics and freedom have been purged and in which all questions of personal relations, which mattered supremely to him, are subordinated to a single fanaticism.

* * *

Americans tell me that General MacArthur does not have a chance of being elected President of the United States, and they are rather surprised he has consented to enter the race. He has against him the American equivalent of the non-conformist conscience (a very forceful factor), since he was divorced some years ago and his first wife is still alive. Even more serious is the General's alleged unpopularity with ex-Servicemen. Once during the war I was told that the chief difference between the U.S. Army and the Navy in the Pacific was that the Army hated MacArthur but thought him a good general, while the Navy just hated him. Yet since he has been in Japan, every one I have met who has visited the Islands agrees that MacArthur has done as extraordinarily efficient job of rebuilding Japan after defeat. The fact that his policy has been mainly directed towards making Japan a military and economic appendage of American Big Business is overlooked, in comparing the efficiency of post-war Japan with the muddle of post-war Germany. Returning from his pro-consulate in June, and undertaking the triumphal tour to which he is entitled as an American commander in the field on his first return to the United States, MacArthur will make a big dent on the public mind at the time of the Republican Convention. I think that his sponsors (Colonel McCormick, Mr. Hearst and the extreme Right Wing of the Republican Party) have their eyes on the Convention rather than the Election. They probably believe that Taft can stop Dewey being nominated, but then all the "dark horses," such as Stassen, Warren, Vandenberg belong to the liberal wing of the party. With MacArthur as a rallying symbol the Right Wing may be able to bargain with the Republican nominee even if they can't put their own candidate in. Some post for the General such as Secretary of State, or Administrator of the E.R.P., might be the price of support. Perhaps the best appraisal of MacArthur yet is that of someone very close to his oldest supporter, Colonel McCormick, who a year ago said: "At present we must back Taft for President. MacArthur is an ideal but I don't know that America is ready for him—yet." Fortunately MacArthur is 68 years old.

* * *

If, in broadcasting about the plight of 460,000,000 children in the world, you mention that the Lord Mayor of London has started a fund for relief, I'm told that you will be making a technical breach of the regulations. You could be cut off as relentlessly as any music-hall comedian making a "blue" joke which is not in his script. Absurd? But that is how the present B.B.C. regulations stand. The Lord Mayor has made his appeal at his allotted time. No further reference to the appeal may be made; so that when the King and the Royal Family gave £1,100 to the fund, that fact could not even be mentioned as a news item. References will be blue-pencilled out of all scripts. If, for instance, in the course of a broadcast to schools, a talk describes the appalling shortages of school equipment in war-devastated countries, it cannot tell the children what they might do about it, although the Lord Mayor's appeal is being promoted by the teachers. This is part of a world-wide attempt to relieve the appalling hardships of children who are going without food and the simplest amenities of life. It is backed by the United Nations, by the Prime Minister, by the Foreign Secretary, by Churchill, by Clement Davies, by the Lord Mayor and mayors and provosts everywhere, but because a B.B.C. committee, composed mainly of the charity organisations, has made a rule—one mention only—it is now a blue-pencilled subject.

* * *

The ostentatious arrival in Palestine of Fawzi bey Kawkji will cause surprise only to the few innocents who still believe that Britain is remaining strictly neutral in the Palestine problem. Fawzi is a Syrian who became the Mufti's chief guerrilla leader during the Arab revolt of 1936-39, when he was already in German pay. He is said to have killed far more Arabs for failing to pay the sums demanded of them than British troops. He fled with the Mufti in 1939 and took part in Rashid Ali's revolt in Iraq in 1941. When that failed he accompanied the Mufti to Berlin and married a Nazi wife. He was next heard of some months ago when he arrived at Lydda airport in a passenger plane and was permitted by the police to travel on to Syria. There, I am told, he had a conference with Brigadier Clayton, the Arab expert, during the Bled Conference of the Arab League. A few weeks ago he crossed the Palestine frontier with an armed band, and on that occasion was repulsed by British troops. Now, he has come in unmolested with, according to one of his staff officers, six weapon carriers, twenty armoured scout cars and more than a hundred assorted light artillery pieces, and occupied the village of Kabatiya which was his headquarters during the Arab revolt. Yet Hector McNeil can state in the House of Commons that we have no evidence that arms supplied to the Arab countries are being used in Palestine to oppose partition.

* * *

Some people who only know Harold Nicolson as an accomplished essayist and broadcaster wondered whether he would be able to cope with the rough and tumble of a South London by-election. A friend who visited Croydon last week tells me that such doubts were quite unjustified. Mr. Nicolson, who seems to shed a year of his age with each election meeting, beams down upon the rollicking hecklers and calms them into silence. Then, when all is calm, he tells a simple story which explains the Government case much better than the statistics with which some of the visiting Labour M.P.s overwhelm their audiences. My friend particularly enjoyed one answer to an interrupter: "No, I do not think it's quite fair to say that the British business man has trampled upon the faces of the poor. But he has sometimes not been very careful where he put his feet." Pathfinder Bennett is also an accomplished politician, but the experts thought that he started his stunt ten days too soon, and could not stand the pace. The result was so open that few bets were being placed, despite the arrival last week of most of the Conservative Central Office, including the chief publicity officer. Lord Woolton knew what it would mean to lose this Tory stronghold.

* * *

The hoary cliché that "hard cases make good law" has always seemed to me an uneasy rationalisation, with a flavour of the court martial about it. We heard it, in effect, again last week when the Home Secretary was dealing with George Benson's amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill (in Committee) seeking to keep boys and girls out of Borstal when they have not been guilty of any offence. At present a child entirely innocent of any crime can be removed from the custody of criminal or neglectful parents and sent to an "approved school." It is no more a criticism of these schools than of any other boarding-schools that they can be hell for some children. Some children, therefore, run away from them, and if they persist they are sent to Borstal. That they will run away from Borstal is equally likely and just as simple; and the next step for them is prison. Mr. Chuter Ede deplored the necessity, but implied that any other course would encourage policemen and education officers to bring criminal charges against children who can at present be brought before juvenile courts (as "in need of care and protection") without being charged at all. Is that the necessary alternative? By the present system we can turn perfectly innocent youngsters, already perhaps predisposed by environment, into crooks. If they won't stay at approved schools, why not try foster parents, or hostels supplying day-schools? Mr. Ede showed, at all events, that he is deeply concerned about the problem, and promised the Standing Committee that he will try to find a solution before the Report Stage of the Bill.

* * *

To make a joke of the pains of child-bearing, to be tickled to death by a man coming in dripping with blood and displaying his amputated hand—such outbursts of clean fun at the Casino seem to me a symptom of the social disease that in the cant phrase we call decadence. The cult of sadism is a menacing and nauseating business; I remember the Berlin bookshops full of flagellation pictures shortly before Hitler's rise to power. We have not got there yet; but there has been a series of posters which base their appeal to film shows on the common response to scenes of whipping. And the latest and generally condemned product of the British film industry actually goes as far as to satisfy the appetite it excites by its posters. In time I suppose people will have learned enough psychology to know that this type of excitement is sexual; it is very odd that the Law adopts a rigidly Puritan attitude towards a book which is frank about the sexual act, but is indifferent to one of the commonest and most insidious forms of perversion.

CRITIC.

SHAM FIGHT

THREE candidates storm Norbury's gates
And battle for Norwood's soul,
For voters tried of calm Woodside,
On the eve of the Croydon poll.

Big guns are deployed on the plains of North Croydon,
The barrage is blazing away,
But the three-way election appeals to no section,
For this is what all of them say.

"Your vote is due for freedom true,
You must vote for the Marshall Plan,
For the King's Navee and Democracy,
And the little North Croydon man."

O, this is the gab of Lib. and Lab.,
And the lad on the Tory pitch—
Each misplaced cross means a Party loss,
But you can't tell t'other from which.

The Tory swears he will back "fair shares,"
He will labour for W.U.,
He will challenge the foe in the Pollittbureau—
And the Socialist says so, too.

The Liberal call is each for all,
And peace in the Uno frame;
In our crisis grave we must work and save—
The Conservative says the same.

So Norbury cheers whenever it hears
Our realm must be free and strong,
If Woodside should split it won't matter a bit,
And Thornton Heath cannot go wrong.

All will vote (if they do) for liberty true,
All will vote for the Marshall Plan,
For the King's Navee and Democracy
And the little North Croydon man.

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Can people eat horse meat and have a clear conscience? I would sooner starve to death than break faith with this intelligent and noble creature. —Letter in *News of the World*. (H. Thompson.)

School teachers in Wales are advised by their associations to discontinue supervising children crossing roads, because the teachers may be liable in the event of accidents.—*Reynolds News*. (Lady Artemus-Jones.)

A Liverpool night watchman, whose 16-year-old daughter was before East London Juvenile Court yesterday, told the bench that he had 25 children and counted them frequently.—*Daily Mail*. (J. G. D. Walker.)

I read that foster mothers are paid 12s. 6d. a week. This is 2s. 6d. less than I have paid to board my dog out for the same period.—*Evening Standard*. (I. S. Jacobs.)

To get sufficient ball boys for South of England Lawn Tennis Championships, Eastbourne Entertainments Committee asks for longer secondary school holidays.—*Sunday Despatch*. (E. Isaacson.)

ANGLO-ARAB TREATIES

TRADITIONS mature quickly and die hard in the Foreign Office. Mr. Bevin's surprise for the diplomats was not his flair for innovation but his obedient conformity to their own settled paths. One of these paths leads British Foreign Secretaries, at well-ordered intervals, into ceremonies of treaty signature with an Arab State. In January, the time-honoured route took Mr. Bevin to Portsmouth and thence to the House of Commons, where he expressed the hope that "the Iraq Treaty which has been worked out with such care will serve as a model for other Middle East defence arrangements." The immediate sequel in Baghdad might have caused a lesser man to regret the hope. But not Mr. Bevin. "The Emir Feisal," he said cheerfully, "will be here at the beginning of next month, and we shall have a talk with him." The Emir, having watched the Iraqi Premier plunge to political doom, shrewdly stayed at home. Frustrated in Cairo, Baghdad and Jedda, Mr. Bevin looks yearningly to Damascus—and consoles himself with Amman.

There is no evidence, however, that the Arab Treaties doctrine has lost any of its appeal in Whitehall. Were that to happen, the impact on Middle Eastern policy would be revolutionary, and many an oracle in Britain's eastern chanceries would stand unenviably exposed. The quest for Arab friendship has been arduous. It has cost Britain dear. The price is written in life and treasure, and in the tireless investment of British political skill. When the logic of extreme pro-Arabism meant sacrifice of other attachments, the sacrifice was freely made. Thus the rancour of France in the Levant, a "squalid war" with Jews in Palestine, and a position of sullen isolation at Lake Success were incurred one after the other as a price paid readily for the ultimate reward. But what if the price is continually exacted and the reward of Arab friendship is still remote? At what stage of disillusionment is the harsh reckoning to be made?

The Arab Treaties policy was born in the 'thirties in an atmosphere conducive to its success. It was felt that to yield British predominance in the Middle East was to surrender it everywhere. To hold that area in potent defence was to wield a power of veto against the ambitions of aspiring world conquerors. Only in the Middle East could military conquest break the confines of a single continent and dominate intercontinental communications. Yet in the days of rising local nationalism a controlling interest in the area was not to be maintained by direct occupation or indirect rule. The Arab Treaties policy, on the other hand, was congenial to Wilsonian principles. It could make Britain the architect of sovereignties. It would enable her to merit, if not to obtain, the gratitude of Arab national movements, while remaining aloof from internal discussions and the tedium of daily administration. The assumption was that in return for these efforts in building and emancipating Arab nations, Britain could expect the alliance of her Arab protégés and their unwavering respect for legitimate British interests in peace and war. As the war approached, the Treaties policy gathered momentum. Egypt and Iraq were raised to sovereignty, Transjordan was financed into a measure of military independence, technical assistance and expert advice were everywhere freely lavished, Kurdish revolts in Iraq were obligingly suppressed, Ibn Saud was well cultivated; and, as a final pre-war bounty, the Palestine White Paper was thrown in for good measure. The Balfour Declaration and Mandate were to be ingeniously transformed into another Arab State fit for treaties to be signed with.

Whether a strategy is wisely conceived can best be tested in the actuality of war. Iraq revolted at the time and place most suitable to German demands. Egypt, neutral between Rommel and Wavell, had to be maintained in alliance by a demonstration of force outside the palace of the independent sovereign. The Palestine Arab leaders, unappeasable by any White Papers, sought their fortune in Berlin. Saudi Arabia and Transjordan were steadfast; but for this the credit lies more with the Treasury than with the Foreign Office. In the Levant States the two new Governments, suddenly rid of the French, politely showed the door to their British liberators and evinced no interest in Treaties. Since the war ended the Arab world has been divided into two categories in relation to the Treaty policy—States which are bound by a Treaty and desired to repudiate it, and States which are not bound by a Treaty and have no intention of concluding one. What Arab States refused separately, the Arab League could not offer collectively. Indeed, the League has played an anti-Treaty role by emphasising Arab autarchy.

It should not be difficult to diagnose the causes of this vast anti-climax. In the first place, the two parties had never envisaged the Treaties in similar terms. In British eyes the Treaty was a definite and firm reconciliation between Arab independence and British strategic needs. In Arab eyes, it was a mere stepping stone leading to the complete abolition of any special British ties. In the British view, the Middle East armies and bases were a protection to the Arabs. In the Arab view they were a standing invitation to attack by other Powers, an intolerable barrier to neutrality and a blow to national pride. The Treaty Policy was bound to be destroyed by xenophobia. For how could xenophobia be relinquished by a ruling caste which had no other hold on popular sentiment? Nor was there any incentive to alliance resting on a common affinity or way of life. For the Arab Pasha the stability of a Gauleiter deriving power from above seemed more inviting than the exacting responsibilities of democracy, with power drawn precariously from below. In fact, the logic of democracy gave Arab leaders the shivers. Miss Freya Stark, invoking an Anglo-Arab amity based on a common love of horses and exotic garments, left them almost as cold.

In resuming the Treaties policy after this experience, Mr. Bevin has all the pathos of a jilted suitor returning again and again to the pursuit, oblivious of unrequited gifts, slammed doors and ignominious expulsions. The gifts are now entirely at his expense. French interests in the Levant and Jewish hopes in Palestine have long ago been proffered—as far as lay in the Foreign Office's power—and ungratefully forgotten. The surrender of the Sudan would win a fleeting smile in Cairo but Mr. Bevin shuns so difficult a benefaction. The hope that Iraq would be appeased by a substantial reduction of British establishments and the promise of financial assistance burnt brightly at Portsmouth, but was speedily quenched. Ibn Saud has found more affluent patrons; even Abdullah is said to be looking westwards and to estimate Lake Success more highly than, on Palestine, Mr. Bevin has done.

One hope alone may offer better prospects for the Arab Treaties now than those which failed to mature during the war. This time the *cordon sanitaire* is against Russian, not German, penetration. Berlin had its attractions for some Arab leaders, but Moscow has none. Here is an influence which may cunningly exploit the accumulated forces of social discontent, resting on huge disparities between mass squalor and the affluence of the few. In face of this danger from their own midst the Arab leaders may think twice about neutrality and, if sufficiently frightened, seek Mr. Bevin's ever-outstretched hand. If that "success" is won, British Socialism will have gained allies through the logic of social backwardness and squalor in the Middle East. It may be a bitter victory. The other way would have been through alliance with all progressive social movements in a pattern of national diversity and in the shelter of international agreements. Mr. Bevin may sometimes see that vision; but time is short and the Foreign Office presses, and events cannot wait on the emergence of free and diverse Middle Eastern democracies. And so "the Emir Feisal will be here at the beginning of next month. . . ." A. S. EBAN.

REPORT FROM PARIS—II

"FOR the first time, all Frenchmen are on the same side of the barricades." The speaker was M. Bidault; the approximate date, September, '44. I recalled those words the other day as I sat listening to him deplore with emotion the death of political democracy in Prague. No disinterred quotation could more ironically point the tragedy of France since the Liberation or underline her current perils. Whoever would to-day seek a clue to the probable future of French politics must look on one or other side of the barricades.

First, the Communists—how strong or weak are they? In conversation they must naturally lay claim to the chance of a Left-wing victory, but they know that in present circumstances it is impossible. They may have been encouraged in one way by the Czech affair, as demonstrating the success with which a determined minority can strike, but it can hardly have failed to scare off some supporters—not, of course, among the hard Communist core, but among malcontents who have voted Communist without being Marxists, and who might at any time swing over in large numbers to de Gaulle, as did German Communists to Hitler in 1933. There is, however, no evidence at present to suggest that they are losing ground at all seriously. They continue to make use of wildly opportunist propaganda, telling one story to the farmers and quite another to the artisans, and getting away with both. While they retained prospects of eventual power they were concerned to disport themselves as strictly constitutional and parliamentarian, but now their best hope may be to disrupt. Even here the lesson of last November should caution them to go warily; but if the Cominform were prepared to run the risk of sacrificing the Communist Party in France in return for maximum interference with Marshall Aid and Western Union, there would be no limit to the damage they could do in the process of committing suicide.

Like the Gaullists themselves, they desire the elimination of the Third Force (as was illustrated by their lining up with their enemies last week-end to vote against the Government). They would welcome the opportunity to pose as the martyrs of reaction. Asked what they will do if de Gaulle comes to power, they reply uncompromisingly: "We shall fight." (By this they mean with industrial weapons, not guns.) Pressed as to whether they would do so if he came to power constitutionally, they first of all say that such a thing is impossible and then declare: "We shall fight *anyway*." Each side accuses the other of preparing *coups*; and an attempted Communist *coup*, or even an engineered strike, might easily be the signal for de Gaulle's arrival. But things are not always what they can be made to seem. After all, neither the Renault strike last May nor the Metro strike last November was started by the Communists. The General has his cells in the unions, and he knows as well as anyone that, once a strike begins, the Communists are politically forced to support it. Such a strategem would be much less indelicate than a direct Gaullist *coup*, which personally I still consider improbable, in spite of the General's equivocal language last Sunday at Compiègne. There remains the daily possibility of wholly genuine strikes fomented by nobody but the exasperated and hard-pressed working-man himself, whose wages fight an ever losing battle with prices. Here are some pre-war and present-day prices (in each case allowing for the kind of quality and place of purchase patronised by, say, a miner) that tell their own tale:

	Francs.	
	Pre-war.	To-day.
Bread (750 gr.) ..	1.30	24
Wine	2.50	58
Meat (1 kilo)	25	420
Shirt	60	1,000
Shoes	120	1,800
Suit	300	10,000

Set these prices against the miner's present wage of around Frs.400 a day (compared with Frs.55 pre-war) and it is not difficult to imagine the extreme struggle he has to support his family.

While such economic disequilibrium persists, the Communists have a strong ally, in spite of the crack in trade union solidarity since November. The C.G.T. used to claim 4,500,000 members (a pretty shaky figure). Of these, 2,000,000 are said to have since drifted out of their unions altogether (the weaker brethren), and *Force Ouvrière* claims another 1,300,000 and could probably muster an actual million. This leaves C.G.T. with a membership of one and a half millions—the old, hard, fighting core of the movement. *Force Ouvrière* derives its main support from white-collar workers, and is lacking in funds, premises and an adequate dynamism. Moreover, there are circumstances in which, under pressure from a Gaullist Government, trade union solidarity might quickly reassert itself.

Now turn to the Gaullists. They are preparing their advent to power—preparing it, in the words of a discreet adherent, "*très doucement,*" an allusion to the softening-up process among the other parties. "If the General comes in," I asked one of his closest advisers, "will Socialist and M.R.P. deputies work with him?" "Of course they will," was the reply, "because the troops (i.e., voters) will demand it, and the deputies will follow the troops." He estimated that the Gaullists could count on the support of four-fifths of M.R.P. and half the Socialists; and while this may be boastful it is not based merely on guesswork, for liaison with elements in both parties is close and thorough. If one were to estimate the prospects for the survival of French democracy by the statements of some of the General's lieutenants, one would be forced to call them non-existent from the start. He tolerates round him some very queer characters indeed, not all of them unimportant, whose talk is scarifying. As one of his own friends said sorrowfully of Malraux: "I do not blame him for serving the General, but for the methods by which he thinks the General should be served." Mauriac accuses him of using de Gaulle as a card in his own game—or, as it were, as a minor character in the greatest historical drama of all times, "Malraux *versus* Stalin." When one reads some of the Gaullist pamphlets describing the General as "*un mystère,*" as "higher than our nature"; when one hears on the lips of some of his wild men trembling references to "the immortal voice," to "the Sacred French Republic, One and Indivisible," one finds oneself only wondering nostalgically why they omit to add that the New Order will last for a thousand years.

In the minds of some, the General is coming to restore the foundations of a crumbling democracy; in the minds of others he is coming with a sword of vengeance to destroy the Communists once and for all, and by whatever means. As between these extremes, here is an authoritative statement of the Gaullist case:

> We do not think we need become an authoritarian party. Of course, if the Communists put themselves outside the law, we shall have to deal with them, but our intention is to govern as a parliamentary regime. The constitution must be reformed; France must have a stronger executive. The Trade Unions must be directly represented, along with other bodies, in the Second Chamber; but on the precise composition of this Chamber the General has not yet fully made up his mind. Union leaders must not be political and must really represent the workers. The card vote must be abolished in favour of a secret ballot.

On economic policy my informant declined to be explicit, on the score that no politician states his policy in advance. "But you can take it we have a very definite and strong economic policy." Nothing more definite? Well, it could be assumed it would include such items as "stability of prices, higher production, more foreign labour, compulsory work" (emphasis on the last). But above all, before all, *energy*—"strong government" and "energy": the words repeated themselves many times. Since then we have heard at Compiègne a more authoritative voice still, though even now much less than explicit. On most matters there is a beautiful vagueness when it comes to policy, and especially on economics; people tend to forget that the General has been in power before, and then he wasn't a marked success. On one point—his attitude to the Communists—de Gaulle on Sunday did give a broader hint, and it was one that supports those who believe he will suppress the party. Communists, he said, should be deprived of the right to hold any position of responsibility.

But what is more important than what they say they will do, or even than what they mean to do, is what they will be forced by circumstances to do. Whether the Gaullists intend it or not, the Communists will see to it that de Gaulle becomes totalitarian. You cannot govern a country against the determined enmity of those who control the working-class machine—not without quickly resorting to undemocratic methods. Even in the programme outlined above there is plenty to disturb most trade unionists. The Communists will ensure much more: after all, they advertise the fact that they will resist. So they will be turned out of Parliament, there will be arrests, concentration camps, government by decree, the whole authoritarian bag of tricks.

On the day on which that happens, political democracy will be as dead for the time being in France under de Gaulle as it is dead to-day in Czechoslovakia under the Communists. But it has not yet happened. The Third Force survives, and its survival is of importance far beyond the frontiers of France itself. France's battle is the battle of all Western Europe; for, if French democracy goes, Western democracy everywhere will be disastrously undermined and half the moral sanction of Western Union will be lost. It will have to be achieved thereafter—if it can be achieved at all—with a totalitarian France as its senior Continental partner. This would make pretty fair nonsense of its claim to "spiritual unity." For Britain, therefore, and for all the Western nations there is the strongest incentive to strengthen the prestige of the Third Force by pressing forward towards a democratic Western Union while there is time. GERALD BARRY

THE CHILDREN'S BILL

(*By a Correspondent*)

THE Children's Bill, embodying substantially the recommendations of the Curtis Committee, places fairly and squarely upon the local authorities the responsibility for the welfare of uncared-for children. They must assume, if necessary, the parental rights forfeited by neglect; but the integrity of the new "parent" is subject to scrutiny, in case he should prove reluctant to display the proper parental affection. Whatever the differences of opinion between those who advocate complete State responsibility and those who prefer dispersed control through local authorities, the proposals indicate that the Government is at last trying to atone for much past misery.

Unhappily, the Bill is defective in its approach to the problem of securing proper supervisory staffs. As a member of the staff in Remand Homes and Hostels in one of the larger counties, I have had first-hand experience of the effect of institutional life on minds incapable of adapting themselves to the needs of their employment. Untrained to the elements of juvenile and adolescent psychology, and confined to their own extremely limited interests, some superintendents cannot understand the implications of children's actions, and become mistrustful, suspicious and, in the end, venemously unfair. The unfairness breeds antipathy, and the conclusion is a bitter and frustrated officer who becomes a warder instead of a warden.

I have worked under a hostel superintendent who began by sharing his sitting-room with the children and taking them for games and outings. Gradually, driven to the conclusion that the lack of apparent affection meant dismal failure on his part, he developed a persecution complex. His compensatory pleasure was to keep the children in a cold room for hours, whilst he described carefully their abnormalities; often he was reduced to banging his fists against the wall and shrieking epithets at the boys. Entering the work with the greatest of good will, but with lack of suitable training and restricted interests, he was reduced to the attitude of a self-tortured sadist.

Persecution, for similar motives, takes many forms. In one Home in which I worked, the children's hair was close-cropped, and they were marched from room to room in the fashion of the Charity Homes of the last century. Invariably, I found much recourse to corporal punishment. Home Office returns of corporal punishment were, in my experience, frequently falsified.

It is easy to find excuses for the local authorities. No rational person would expect that they should ferret out traits that are responsible for the exhibitions of inhumanity prevalent in their Homes. Initially, however, they must bear the responsibility of appointing the staffs. Members of the staffs I met had no academic qualifications and, in some instances, their quotient of intelligence was deplorably low.

The Curtis Committee was emphatic in its demands for wider use of the foster-parent system, and the Children's Bill has rightly endorsed this principle. But there are snags. In one county, where the scheme has been operating for some time, many boys about the age of eleven have been in four private homes already, and some older boys I have spoken to have been in as many as seven. Boys have been "tried out" in the public Homes, then thrust into foster-homes, and then thrown back to another county Home before they had time to recover their breath from the first round. Comedy? Yes, were it not for signs of a quickening rot in the boys' moral character as they were bundled from one pair of "incompatible" hands to another.

If it is to defeat the inhumanities of cold administration, the Bill must enforce provision of training centres, preferably independent of universities, under staffs with a real grasp of the problems of the welfare of children. There are not the facilities under a general social science course for the closely personal observation needed to consider the suitability for would-be superintendents and their wives. A separate, residential course of training would ensure that applicants are temperamentally, as well as intellectually, qualified for this exacting work.

This training should also be enforced for the staff entrusted with the wide powers of inspection enacted in the Bill. It is not sufficient that inspectors should be drawn from the broad field of social work on testimonials of their evident ability in another branch of educational administration. This has resulted so far in the "drain-and-kitchen-sink" type of inspector, with about as much effect on the children's lives as the local sanitary official. It may be worth consideration that the position of Inspector should be a promotion from the supervision of a successful and happy home. At the present moment, this is rare.

In the matter of salaries, Remand Home superintendents, under the recommendations of the Reynold Report, are paid on a scale which reaches its maximum at £525 per annum, whilst wardens of Homes and Hostels are paid on a considerably lower scale. Yet—and I think a large number of Remand Home superintendents would agree—the clear-cut, disciplinary problem of holding a child only until he is due to appear at court or begin sentence at an Approval School is much easier on the nerves than the task of winning the affection of children who often enter Hostels and Homes with a determination to be perfect little horrors.

A child will respond to the human realities of life—the environment; the note in a voice; the sense of well-being he is experiencing—rather than all the elaborate machinery designed to keep him well-clothed and fed. Greater care in the selection and training of all who will come into contact with the nation's neglected and unwanted children is emphatically needed.

The Arts and Entertainment

SOME CONDUCTORS

In the general dispersal of artistic talent brought about by the Nazi and Fascist regimes, it was the New World which caught almost all the first-rate composers, executants and musical scholars. Among the leading non-Nazi and non-Fascist conductors, for example, Fritz Busch and Erich Kleiber transferred their activities mainly to South America; Toscanini, Bruno Walter and Otto Klemperer to the United States. It would be interesting to learn whether any of these eminent musicians thought of settling in England, where at least two of them (Busch and Walter) had long and close connections; and, if so, whether the notion was encouraged or discouraged by those who control our musical destinies. No doubt America had far more to offer in sheer scope of activity, in financial rewards, and in blessed distance from the European inferno; did she not also show a more open disposition to welcome the world's best talents, from whatsoever source recruited? At all events, it is sad to reflect how sorely we need at this moment the inspiriting presence of one or two conductors of the highest quality, not merely as visitors, but as residents, to raise the standards and consolidate the whole shaky structure of our orchestral and operatic life.

We have in England to-day only one conductor of unquestioned genius, Sir Thomas Beecham—a man whose mercurial temperament makes him more valuable, these days, on the rostrum than as the responsible Artistic Director of a large-scale enterprise. For the production of great new conductors the times are out of joint. Young men may start their careers with an idealism no less ardent than that of Mahler at Vienna, or of Nikisch at Leipzig; but their hopes are soon crushed by the slapdash commercialism of our day, and the increasing dominance of a purely trade union attitude towards art. In addition to these fairly widespread maladies, our English conductors have two national failings to contend with: rhythmic imprecision, and indifference to sensuous beauty of tone, whether instrumental or vocal.

I hope that we shall not be prevented, by interested "isolationist" pressure, from hearing the best of the younger generation of conductors (men such as Herbert von Karajan) who have yet to establish their international reputation; meanwhile, it is greatly to the credit of the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the New Era Concert Society that they have enabled us to renew acquaintance, in rapid succession, with three of the leading senior conductors of the day in Messrs. Kleiber, Klemperer and Furtwängler. Of these three, the most masterly, to my mind, is Erich Kleiber; in spite of his immense continental renown, he was comparatively little known in England before the war. I was able to hear only one of his concerts, but this included a performance of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* memorable for its precision of detail and its rare combination of temperament with taste and consistently beautiful tone. I fancy the L.P.O. were as surprised as anyone in the audience at some of the sounds which they produced that afternoon, and I am delighted to learn that they have invited Mr. Kleiber to pay us a much longer visit in the near future.

He was succeeded at the L.P.O. desk by Dr. Furtwängler, a man of sensibilities no less refined and intense, but of a much more uncertain taste. He seems to have changed little with the years. His readings of the classics are still highly controversial, and in the same way: he inclines to extremes of dynamics (a fault which I personally much prefer to the more frequent one of playing almost everything in a stolid mezzo-forte), and he is much given to hurrying or slackening the tempo in obedience to the picturesque demands of the moment. In a Brahms or Beethoven symphony this can be extremely irritating; but in more specifically romantic and descriptive music, such as Wagner or Strauss, Dr. Furtwängler often achieves magical effects, a great part of the magic consisting in his insistence on a beautifully even, well-tempered balance of sonoroties. Nothing could have been more delicious as pure sound, or more rhythmically supple, than his handling of the orchestral part of the Mahler song-cycle *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen,* in which he seemed to inspire Mme Zareska to a most sensitive performance and one more steady tonally than some which she has previously given of this lovely little work. Otto Klemperer, so far as could be judged from an isolated concert with the Philharmonia Orchestra, inclines now to a clear, authoritative and restrained reading of the classics, somewhat reminiscent of Weingartner's approach; while his well-known sympathy with modern composers was revealed in a performance of Stravinsky's 1945 Symphony which brought out the astonishing inventiveness of this music in pattern and in tonal combinations: it possesses the freshness and inhumanity of something from another planet.

I have allowed myself little space to discuss *The Valkyrie* at Covent Garden, because the current spate of opera tends to monopolise critical attention to the neglect of concerts. It is in many respects a creditable attempt at a difficult task. The first act, it is true, ran its course at a rather low emotional temperature; but the normally less interesting second act was intensely alive, what with the majesty of Hans Hotter's Wotan, the radiant power and ease of Kirsten Flagstad's Brünhilde and the unregal but splendidly angry and serious Fricka of Edith Coates. Dr. Rankl is temperamentally more at home in this elemental music than in either *Tristan* or *Meistersinger;* but some of his orchestral material is at present too poor to allow of a really satisfactory ensemble. The opera was lit mainly by a searchlight from the roof, which followed the soloists around with the jerky persistence of early radar on the track of a Ju 88; in the softer passages the hum of its generator was clearly and unpleasantly audible: out damnèd spot! Friedrich Schramm, a Swiss producer, grouped his principals effectively enough, but in putting the minor Valkyries through their paces he seemed to have enlisted the services of Arthur Marshall. I seem to hear that imperious voice raised in encouragement and brisk reproof: "Now, sharp's the word, Waltraute, and quick's the action . . . a *splendid* lunge, Helmige dear, that's the ticket . . . now all together, girls, spears *raise*, spears *lower* . . ."

Desmond Shawe-Taylor

THE MOVIES

"Enrico IV" and "A String of Beads," at the Academy

"The Lady from Shanghai," at Gaumont and Marble Arch Pavilion

"Idol of Paris," at Warner's

Pirandello's tragedy or—as you look at it—tragicomedy of *Enrico IV* is the only stage masterpiece that on the screen has retained something like its original stature. I speak from a memory dating back many years, of the text and not of performance; but it seems to me that in almost every respect the film shown at the Academy translates into its own terms the essence of this profound and light, witty, tragic, superbly daring, and balanced play. If anything at all has been lost, it is that final presence of actors and audience together which only stage performance can offer and which bound Pirandello irresistibly to the theatre. He added, one might truly say, a new dimension to the hallowed "three walls": that of the complex, unfathomable audience itself. In a hundred ways, some ingenious or shocking, some deeply disturbing, he crossed and recrossed the border-lines behind Art and Life. Which are more real, accepted appearances or the things of the imagination? Again and again Pirandello puts that idea to the test, going to extremes that no one who has not seen a Pirandello play would think feasible; and to this equivocation of real and ideal he adds in *Enrico IV* the ultimate twist of a madman who for twenty years enacts an historical role. If this enactment, with its darting illuminations and its return to sanity and stark tragedy should remind us of the play-scene in *Hamlet,* it is because certain ideas latent in Shakespeare grow here to a new complexity and force. Can the screen fittingly deal with a dramatic creation of this order? I think the film at the Academy proves that it can, and I could wish that Olivier's *Hamlet* were already here to set beside Giorgio Pastina's achievement of modern tragedy. He has, it seems to me, made up for the lack of stage presence by refinements and strokes of emphasis that only the film can provide. Fascinating indeed, and varied with endless subtlety, is the fusion of the most distant past with the present, of play-acting and cold fact: a web more toughly if less magically devised than Cocteau's in *L'Eternal Retour.* The acting, and especially that of Osvaldo Valenti in the title part, inconspicuously triumphs. I could go on writing about this piece in half a dozen columns, but my space is limited, and I must leave it at that. Also at the Academy will be found a documentary film of Assam life by Laurie Lee and Ralph Keene, the makers of *Cyprus is an Island,* which succeeds in being even more delightful than that delightful Mediterranean visit.

Mr. Orson Welles has disappointed us now for so long—rumours of plans, love life, appearances as an actor, etc.—that his direction of *The Lady from Shanghai* comes as a pleasant shock. It may not be, this murky and involved thriller, the best Welles, but Welles it is, and that still counts for something. The manner, the method are there. One sequence, indeed, the climax of a confrontation of three people in a hall of mirrors, contains distortions as brilliant as any thrown upon the screen by *Citizen Kane:* first the lovers, alone, multiplied and varied; then six sticks invading adjacent mirrors, six pairs of sticks, six crippled husbands; the nightmare of reflections produces a whole crowd of people, all sprung from the original three and moving to a pattern when they move; each is armed, and the shots splinter a hundred images before first one and then another of the menacing figures falls. I have picked out the most striking example of the harsh, brilliant quality that persists in Mr. Welles; but all through there is evidence of that genius for dissonance which a few years ago captivated our eyes and ears.

If only the material were worthy of the craftsman! Unfortunately it never is. Mr. Welles infuses a positively Strindbergian hatred into his situations, and two of the actors (Everett Sloane and Glenn Anders) give the best performances that have come out of Hollywood for a twelve-month; but not even that can raise *The Lady from Shanghai* out of its aspiring thriller class. Nor, in dramatic effectiveness, can this new piece of Welles's compare with Henri-Georges Clouzot's *Le Corbeau* and *Quai des Orfèvres,* films that owe not a little in visual intensity to the original Welles.

Idol of Paris brings to life—if that's the word—the ladies with riding whips who have been decorating the walls for some weeks. This home-grown fancy is a *Young England* of the screen; never, I believe, has such largesse of unconscious comedy been poured into the cinema-goer's lap. My own favourite moment is the hero and heroine making music together, she holding the violin, he wielding the bow; but others may prefer the leonine world-pianist and his sheep-love in the front row, or the lady stripped by a prospective father-in-law of all but her nightdress in the lounge of a Russian hotel—Russian because very soon she must stumble out through the snow. Afterwards she arrives in Paris to make herself "Queen of the Half-World" by beating up Cora Pearl in a dual with whips. Half-Paris is there in the Bois at dawn. Look, the Emperor! The naughty countesses! Dear old Offenbach!—no he's burning the midnight oil over his new opera about her. Ah, those were days; and she did it all for purity.

William Whitebait

RADIO NOTES

Listening to the rival politicians of "Friday Forum" (that pallid and rickety offspring of one of the B.B.C.'s most exciting programmes, the original gathering-together a year ago of the editors of the sixpennies) laying one another out with party slogans and *tu quoques,* stuttering and extemporising with one eye on the Party Whip and the other on the voters in the constituencies, how often has one sighed for a few facts, a little dispassionate information, a statement of principle. Political controversy, theoretically so desirable on the air, in practice too often lapses into a display of wrangling and righteous indignation calculated to inspire only the most naive of political bobbysoxers. The programme, "The Labour Party and the Middle Classes," was, then, a notable innovation, civilised in its presentation. Introduced by Mr. R. B. McCallum, the author of the scholarly and objective *The British General Election, 1945*, it consisted of two separate and contrasted statements of opinion on the subject by Mrs. Honor Croome and Mr. Crossman. The statements were expressions of principle and belief; there was no scoring of debating points; and, since discussion is only of value where some measure of agreement is possible, there was rightly no discussion. In other words, such facts as exist the listener was given, and then, having heard the two opinions, he was left to make up his mind or be confirmed in the belief he already held. Mr. Crossman confirmed me in mine, or rather, with no disrespect to him, for his statement was a model of exposition, Mrs. Croome failed to shake me. She would have done better justice to her case if her expression of it had been more temperate; as it was, one found a morbid fascination in listening to class-rancour dripping out of the loudspeaker. But ideally, the whole programme should have been heard in relation to the symposium "The Family Budget," in which working-class housewives from various parts of the country give details of the family incomes of wage-earners and how they are spent. This important and timely series of talks is a scoop for "Woman's Hour"—and what an admirably intelligent magazine programme "Woman's Hour" is—but it is absurd that it should be heard only at the relatively inaccessible hour of two in the afternoon in the Light Programme. It places such broadcasts as the Croome-Crossman statements in perspective and has a serious bearing on such regular features as "Progress Report." As broadcasting matter, the talks are very moving in the simplicity and restraint of their narration, and one suggests that if "The Labour Party and the Middle Classes" is repeated it should be done so side by side with at least a selection of "The Family Budget" series.

Mr. Sackville West's play *The Rescue* holds the air superbly. It is conceived in terms of radio to a degree that only Mr. Tyrone Guthrie and Mr. MacNeice in their very different ways have equalled. Mr. Sackville West is helped, of course, by the perennial excellence of his story, the Odyssey, but the freshness of his treatment of it is his own. He is helped, too, by Mr. Britten's music; never, one imagines, has music been better or more integrally used in a radio play; in this work, as in opera, words and music should be discussed together. My business, however, is with words, and what immediately strikes one in *The Rescue* is the beautiful clarity of the language and the sharpness of the visual imagery, as in such a line as "The Sea is dark as a mussel-shell": One is made continually to *see*. Then there is the range of the language; indeed, in this respect, and judged as poetic drama, not simply as radio drama, *The Rescue* seems to me second in our time only to *The Family Reunion*. But what impressed me anew in Mr. Gielgud's recent production was the exquisite contrasts of mood and action contained in the whole. There is, for instance, the magical moment when Telemachus describes the outline of his father's profile to Odysseus immediately before recognising him; there is the splendidly barbaric slaughter of the suitors at the end of the play, the most skilfully convincing treatment of violent action that I know in radio drama. Indeed, the mounting tension of the second half of the play is almost unbearably exciting. It is a most satisfying work, and the new production was worthy of it. The acting was first-rate, and Mr. Clifford Evans, as Odysseus, was masterly in the range, sureness and sensitivity of his technique and voice.

WILLIAM SALTER

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

THE absolute right of modern painters to paint what they like how they please imposes a difficult choice on the young artist. The man whose talent does not drive him down a particular path must force himself to choose, the more narrowly the better, what he will attempt, for it is only too easy to wander in the forest without getting anywhere. Unlike the French, English artists do not sufficiently realise the enormous advantages of restricting themselves either to a subject or to a small range of colour or form—to a severe limiting framework of almost any kind. The process defines the painter's problem and in the result it concentrates all his powers within the boundaries he has laid down: few indeed are the works which are overcharged or too densely packed with feeling. It seems as if, in an age of specialisation, those whom it could serve best reject it.

The illustration *par excellence* is Modigliani, whose work is now being shown at Gimpel Fils (84 Duke Street). Confining himself from the start to a single subject, the human figure, he adopted a rigid manner within which he could paint with freedom, passion, subtlety—and great variety. In his case a series of happy chances, more than his own deliberate choice, led to the discovery of the right limitations: an extremely sensitive Italian sculptor fell under the spell of Negro art and, frustrated in his calling by poverty, became a painter almost against his will. The present show includes several exquisite drawings, especially the portraits of Zborowski and Soutine. It is usual for sculptors' outlines to suggest the volumes they enclose more surely than do those of painters, who can never forget tone and colour; but even so, Modigliani's line is exceptionally alive throughout its length and of greater delicacy than that of Maillol or Eric Gill. The paintings, degraded in one's mind to little more than coloured drawings after nine years of black-and-white reproductions, astonish and delight by the richness of the handling, as in the collar and tie of the *Baranowski* (No. 1) and throughout the magnificent Courtauld figure. It is time people forgot about the long necks and blind eyes, labels so often used to dismiss a great artist. If they look carefully at these fine portraits they will discover, on leaving, that all their friends remind them of Modigliani's pictures—if they look carefully at the friends. Though small, this is a good exhibition of a master too little appreciated in England.

At the Lefevre, Robert Medley's scenes of streets in the Near East are peopled by mysterious traders in a blue twilight. Influences are unmistakable in his work, but he is always a sensitive painter. Nostalgic dreams of the near and distant past are suddenly arrested by the strange meeting of fabulous figures, events which seem to have tragic implications we cannot define. Cecil Collins, also at the Lefevre, provides a complete contrast. Original and wholly subjective, these dry gouaches spring from a genuine, almost fanatical, poetic feeling. But Mr. Collins's invention is not generally equal to expressing this and he resorts to expedients like the Fool *motif* and other pretensions which are unworthy of him. He is still most successful in his least ambitious efforts, such as a tiny pastel called *The Meal* and in pure decorations (Nos. 20 and 29).

Leonard Appelbee, in his latest work at the Leicester Galleries, has been experimenting with larger landscapes and flower pieces. He is fond of a diagonal plan built up in little triangles laid on with a palette knife. The method introduces distortions which are often inappropriate, though it is highly successful in projecting the planes of a hill in the large *Bethania* (No. 17). It is gratifying to see the British Council has bought this. In his fine pre-war pictures of fish, a few of which are exhibited, Mr. Appelbee was already painting with sure vigorous brush strokes which gave his dark greys and browns a sparkle. To some extent this has been lost. The *St. Jerome* (No. 2) suggests that he might be wiser to continue his researches in the limited field of still life, where his gift for composition and feeling for texture prosper better than in the open air.

EARDLEY KNOLLYS

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THE THEATRE

"I Remember Mama," at the Aldwych

"Six Men of Dorset," at the Unity

I Remember Mama, a potpourri of scenes from American family life is "corn." Corn? Yes, corn is when Mama is so beautiful, so patient, so understanding, so wise, while at the same time being so practical, sensible and busy that it all brings a catch to your throat every time she comes in. Corn is Uncle Chris, a drunk living with his tart, and yet invested with an air of such innocent and sweet simplicity, for all his loud voice, that his deathbed scene, with his "woman" on one side, and Mama on the other handing him his last whisky, could find a place in any Sunday School Annual. Corn comic situations are about fat aunts and tiny husbands; one corn girl has a darling cat called Uncle Elizabeth (because she didn't know the difference between toms and queens), and it's very nearly put away but not *quite*; and another corn girl writes stories out of her head, and they aren't very good and then she writes a realistic one about Mama and it's a wonderful success. It was Mama's idea: she suggested it should be about Pop, only corn Pops don't do very much: they just smile rather asininely all through and back Mama up (for corn is American, and America is a matriarchy).

In the corniest corn each black-out line is prepared a long, long way off, until, with the most breathless of pauses, just when you can't bear it a moment longer, the very bromide you have waited for is at long last spoken or done. *I Remember Mama* is the corniest corn. The only interest is to see whether the English will take it. Naturally we lap up our native corn by the plateful, but are we yet Americanized enough to eat up theirs? My guess is—not yet. The management (H. M. Tennent) wisely scattered the second-night critics to the far corners of the house, tempting them with signs marked "Exit" and "Bar." This enables me to give the producer a tip: from the sides of the dress circle you can't see one quarter of the play.

Unity Theatre are giving for a short season *Six Men of Dorset,* the play about the Tolpuddle Martyrs by Miles Malleson and H. Brooks. By placing the family relationship well in the foreground the authors have made a moving and human document out of this story of the founding of an agricultural labourers' union, and the arrest and trial of George Loveless and his associates. Unity is now wholly amateur, and the performance has the usual amateur faults; but there is nothing amateur about Derek Birch's production, and Mr. Laurence Davies and Miss Hilda Fennemore play Loveless and his wife with great restraint and feeling.

T. C. Worsley

Correspondence

CHEAP MONEY

Sir,—Sir Hubert Henderson says he never suggested funding *the whole* of the floating debt—and so adding £150 millions to the annual interest charge—but only "reducing the proportions of the short-term debt." I find that his actual words last July were: "Mr. Dalton has missed the opportunity of turning a large part" of the short-term debt "into really long-dated securities on a 3 per cent. basis." I did indeed! It would have been idiotic to substitute 3 per cent. for ½ per cent. borrowing on such a scale.

In fact, the floating debt has run down by more than £500 millions—from £6,760 millions to £6,200 millions—in the past twelve months, chiefly because of our ever-growing revenue surplus. This process is much healthier than funding.

Nor do I regard 3 per cent. as an appropriate, or necessary, long-term rate. I hold that, failing general acceptance by investors of a lower rate, a quite practicable measure of direction of capital into the gilt-edged field would bring the rate down to 2½ per cent., or possibly even less.

Mr. Frisby, I think, much exaggerates the importance, as an inflationary influence, of capital gains realised and spent while security prices were rising. I prefer Sir Hubert Henderson's view that "the cheap-money policy has been only a very minor factor in the inflationary complex, so unimportant . . . as to be scarcely worth considering."

But, whatever it was worth last year, this particular inflationary influence must now have disappeared, following the fall in security prices.

Hugh Dalton

House of Commons.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Sir,—Will you allow me to confront Mr. Young's allegations concerning Czechoslovakia with the real facts?

(1) According to Mr. Young, the Czechoslovak Communists adhered to the "compromise policy" embodied in the Kosice Programme, "definitely promising them (the workers) Socialism in our time." The Kosice Programme does not represent a compromise, "upon which agreement had been reached." It was the programme of the Communist Party which the other parties had to accept if they wanted to resume their activity in their country. It was not a compromise, nevertheless it was a moderate programme, corresponding to the then (1945) Communist party line. It never was said to promise "Socialism in our time."

(2) It is not true that the nationalization decrees of October, 1945, were only an implementation of the Kosice Programme. It can easily be shown that they went—for better or worse—much further than this Programme. President Benes never declared "that they meant the socialisation of the Czechoslovak Republic." What he really said, without referring only to these decrees, was that Czechoslovakia is on her way to socialisation.

(3) It is not true that the recent crisis arose "on the issue of the implementation of that People's Programme" (this term is invented by Mr. Young) and that the non-Socialist Ministers resigned "when it came to the point of introducing Socialism in our time." The crisis arose because the non-Communist majority of the Government (and the population) protested against the attitude of the Communist Minister of the Interior, who refused to carry out a decision of the Government, prohibiting the victimisation of non-Communists in the Police Forces. "Socialism in our time"—again an invention of Mr. Young—was not in the Government programme, and nobody wanted by resigning to prevent or to delay the fulfilment of this never given promise.

(4) The resignation of twelve Ministers was not "the deliberate revocation by one section of its previous unconstrained undertaking." All measures taken by a coalition Government have to be agreed beforehand by the parties forming the coalition. The Communists suddenly demanded the nationalization of all enterprises with more than fifty employees, in spite of the fact that the programme of the Government, pronounced by Mr. Gottwald in Parliament on July 8th, 1946, said plainly:

> "The Government takes this opportunity to declare that it regards the drive for the nationalization of production as finished."

Nevertheless the Communists ordered the nationalization of the enterprises in question with immediate effect and without—so far—any legislation at all. Does Mr. Young maintain that the Communists "adhered to the compromise policy" or to any agreed or dictated programme at all?

(5) Mr. Young speaks of the twelve Ministers as of a "minority section." These Ministers represent 147 members of Parliament. The Communists muster 114 M.P.s, and nine fellow-travellers in Social Democrat disguise joined with them. Will Mr. Young pretend that 123 M.P.s out of 300, or exactly 41 per cent., represent a majority with a legitimation to suppress the views—to say the least—of a "minority" of 59 per cent.?

So much about the "facts" presented by Mr. Young. Is it still necessary to deal with his conclusions?

Czechoslovak Socialist

ONOTO OCCASIONS

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in civvy street

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SIR,—The present unholy fuss over Czechoslovakia seems to boil down to two allegations: (1) that it is a case of Russian aggression, in every respect similar to German aggression in 1938–1939; (2) that the Czech Communists have "swallowed," "liquidated" or otherwise undesirably disposed of the Czech Social Democrats.

As to (1), I am glad to see in your leading article that you repudiate this tosh. In 1938, after a lot of raucous speeches by Hitler, Czechoslovakia was invaded and dismembered, and in 1939 swallowed whole by the Nazi Reich. In 1948, so far as I have read, not one Russian soldier or plane has moved into Czechoslovakia, and not one Soviet leader has opened his mouth on the subject.

But, say the objectors, Russia has no need to use military force. The work is done for her by indigenous Communists, whom a comic gentleman on the B.B.C. last week described as "traitors in the pay of the enemy." It might do this gentleman and others good to cogitate by what process traitors in enemy pay have succeeded in any country at all, let alone in intelligent Czechoslovakia, in becoming the biggest political party and in "swallowing" other parties.

That brings me to (2). I write as an old revolutionary Socialist who learnt the fundamentals of Socialism from the grand old men of Social Democracy before 1914. In those far-off days it was possible for Right and Left Socialists to co-operate in one party without subjection to interrogatories as to whether we believed in parliamentary or dictatorial tactics, in physical or moral force. (Many in fact believed in both.) It is often supposed that this happy state of things was terminated by the Russian Revolution. As a matter of fact it was terminated by the outbreak of war in 1914, when the Socialist movement split from top to bottom on the issue of collaboration with capitalist war-makers. It will not be denied that the resultant schism, which in due course crystallised into that between Social Democrats and Communists, is the worst thing that has happened to the movement in this century.

Anyone who desires the victory of Socialism in our time must surely desire first and foremost the reparation of the 1914 schism and the restoration of working class unity on a basis which will prevent its repetition. Yet, whenever Communists and Social Democrats come together, our little-minded pundits raise a howl that the former are "swallowing" the latter. I have never witnessed the process of a Communist swallowing a Social Democrat, and do not know what it is supposed to be like. But I suspect that the fear behind the fudge is something like this: "These Communists are made of sterner stuff than we. They have made their politics into a religion, which we have not. They are at it seven days a week, which we are not. If we get together, therefore, there is a dreadful danger that their policy will get adopted. Anything but that—even the postponement of Socialism, even a third world war, rather than the achievement of Socialism by other means than the constitutional business of first, second and third readings in two Houses to which we are accustomed!"

This fear, which was behind the betrayals of 1914, 1926 and 1931, evidently still walks. But what sort of Socialists are those whom it actuates?

ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON

BRITISH POLICY IN EAST AFRICA

SIR,—In his letter published in your issue of Feb. 21st Mr. John Gild asserts that the scheme for an East African High Commission is a decisive step towards the domination of British East Africa by a few thousand white settlers. This is indeed an extraordinary contention, conceived in ignorance, to put forward about a scheme establishing a Legislative Assembly on which there cannot be more than two representatives of the unofficial European community of Kenya out of a total membership of 23, and on which 17 of the remaining 21 members will be officials, or Indian, Arab or African members.

Mr. Gild compares the present scheme unfavourably from the point of view of the representation of the races on the Assembly with the original proposals put forward as a basis for discussion in 1945. If he will make a closer comparison between the two schemes than apparently he has done, he will see that the principle of equality of racial representation has not in fact been abandoned and that the balance of representation on the unofficial side of the Assembly has not been altered. The Secretary of State and the East African Governors were concerned to devise a scheme which would avoid the emphasising of communal differences and would give the maximum encouragement to developing territorial and East African loyalties; and this will be the desire of every member of the new Assembly when it meets in April. But Mr. Gild's insistence on the racial aspect makes it necessary to examine the composition of the unofficial side of the Assembly in detail.

Of the 13 unofficial members there will be one member representing each of the main races, African, European and Indian, from each of the three territories, nine in all. There will be one Arab. There will be three members each elected by the unofficial members of this territorial Legislative Council voting as a whole. It is presumably to these three members that Mr. Gild objects, but possibly he has overlooked that they replace four unofficial members who were to be nominated by the High Commission under the original proposals. If it is suggested that these three members will necessarily be Europeans, that is not the case; the unofficial members of the Uganda Legislative Council have, in fact, elected an Indian.

It is not the case that Europeans predominate on the unofficial side of the Legislative Councils of the three territories. Uganda has three Indian, three European and four African unofficial members. Under the new arrangements to come into force in April Kenya will have 11 European and 11 non-European unofficial members (5 Indians, 4 Africans and 2 Arabs). In Tanganyika the composition on the unofficial side is likely shortly to be 7 Europeans and 7 non-Europeans (4 Africans and 3 Indians). The recent substantial increases in African representation hardly accord with what is apparently Mr. Gild's main thesis—namely that policy is directed towards the domination of East Africa by European settlers.

Mr. Gild next questions whether the inclusion of Tanganyika in this scheme is compatible with the Trusteeship Agreement. In the opinion of His Majesty's Government there is no doubt that it is. Indeed, its main object is to associate representatives of the public of all races with the running of inter-territorial services which had not previously been subject to effective public criticism and debate. It represents a notable political advance for all three territories and all races in them.

Mr. Gild's final contention—that "the explanation of the retreat of the Colonial Office is no doubt to be found in the construction of a military base in Kenya"—is completely without foundation. The question whether or not there is to be a military base in Kenya did not enter into consideration of the problem and was not a factor present at any stage in the minds of those concerned with working out the scheme.

K. W. BLACKBURNE,
Director of Information Services, Colonial Office.

SOVIET ARTISTS

SIR,—Mr. Raymond Mortimer's remarks in last week's NEW STATESMAN AND NATION are typical of our self-righteous intellectual pontiffs. For them art is so sacred that they regard as blasphemy any fundamental criticism of the nature of art such as takes place in the Soviet Union. Hence Mr. Mortimer's infantile attack on the Soviet attitude to art. Do Shostakovitch and other composers take the criticism of the Central Committee of the Communist Party to heart because they fear "a dose of banishment to the arctic"? (Can Mr. Mortimer really substantiate this childish gibe?) Or because they consider such criticism to be well-founded and in the interests of the people?

The Central Committee and artists' organisations

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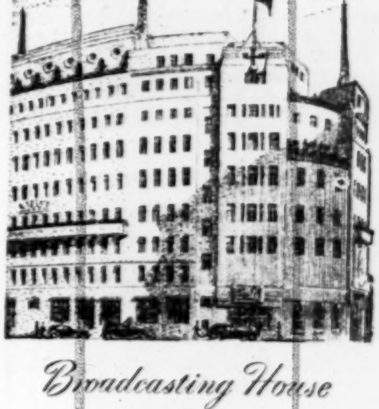

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base their pronouncements on the belief that man is the centre of the universe heriocally struggling to overcome his environment. And only when art expresses such a content can it flourish as a positive force. In this spirit, despite its many faults and reckless enthusiasms, Soviet art can give birth to masterpieces of the cinema, to a poet like Mayakovsky, or a writer like Sholokhov.

Mr. Mortimer would do better to pay less attention to the Soviet artists who are at least solving their problems, and more to the well-being of our own artists, who, with their morbid concern for the abstract and personal in nearly all fields of art, hardly inspire the people in this time of crisis.

MARTIN MITCHELL

CORIOLANUS

SIR,—We are very appreciative of the review by Mr. George Rylands of *Coriolanus* (Harley Granville-Barker, *Prefaces to Shakespeare, V*) in your issue of February 21, and for the prominence accorded to it.

We cannot, however, allow the last paragraph of the review to pass unchallenged, and in particular the following sentences:—

> "It is hard for a teacher of English literature with his pupils' needs at heart to forgive the publishers for the outrageous price of this volume."
>
> "Surely fifteen (shillings) is more than inflationary?"

These words, we feel, cannot fail to be construed by those of your readers who have no working knowledge of present-day publishing conditions as tantamount to an accusation of profiteering.

We protest, therefore, most strongly against these statements. In our view they overstep the bounds of fair comment, and are damaging to our reputation.

It is a matter of concern and surprise to us that THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, for which we have always had a high regard, should allow statements of this kind to appear in its columns.

We invite Mr. Rylands to substantiate his comments, and, to assist him, will gladly provide the comparative production costs for 1939 and 1948. He will find that there is an overall average rise of something in the neighbourhood of 100 per cent.

We also offer Mr. Rylands a friendly hint. As an author himself he should appreciate that, as an author's prestige increases, the scale of royalties payable to him by his publishers also increases.

MARGARET DOWLING, *Director,*
Sidgwick and Jackson, Limited

[Those who teach English Literature at the Universities must commend the best texts to their students. Granville-Barker's is the best; but a poor student cannot pay 15s. Messrs. Sidgwick and Jackson's Hamlet was sold in 1940 at 10s. 6d. with more than half as many pages (339 pp.) again as *Coriolanus* (203 pp.) for which they now charge 15s. To urge a policy of cheaper books for students is not to make a charge of "profiteering." We believe that 60 per cent. increase more nearly represents the rise in book-production costs since 1939, but owing to the larger edition now printed, nothing like the whole of this increase is generally passed on to the public.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

THEATRE CONFERENCE

SIR,—In replying to Mr. Walter Payne's letter in your issue of March 6th, 1948, we should probably find it profitable to carry on a long discussion about the recent Theatre Conference, but we must content ourselves with the following remarks.

(a) Mr. Payne's suggestion that the youngish enthusiasts failed to bring to the attention of Mr. Priestley the letters from the Managerial Associations is both discourteous and untrue. It implies the suppression of important documents, and in the absence of supporting evidence the least Mr. Payne can do is to withdraw unreservedly.

(b) Mr. Priestley was kept fully informed throughout the preparatory period of all the communications from the Managerial Associations, and on one occasion the text of a leading article which appeared in the *Theatres Industry Journal* was cabled to him at Mexico City, where he was representing Great Britain at Unesco, so that he might be kept fully informed and enabled to reply, which he did in characteristically forthright manner.

(c) It is interesting to trace the attitude of the Managerial Associations, or rather of their spokesman, from their response to the first invitation "that the Conference was unnecessary and unwanted," an attitude to which Mr. Payne has now returned. Finding that nearly every theatre organisation except themselves did want the Conference they then argued at length that it was undemocratically constituted. A final letter, sent on December 23rd and pointing out that under the constitution it was almost impossible for the managerial organisations to be outvoted owing to the system of checks and balances, remained acknowledged but not answered, as was an invitation to discuss the matter personally with representatives of the Preparatory Committee. Finally, just before the Conference, Mr. Payne changed his tactics again, and sent a letter to Sir Stafford Cripps which looked very much like an attempt to persuade him not to take part in the Conference. It levied a whole series of objections against Mr. Priestley as chairman.

We are sorry to see that Mr. Payne and his associates are trying to keep alive the bogies that were successfully buried at the Conference, and we appeal to them to drop personal rancour and instead to lend to the British Theatre Conference Standing Committee, which is due to be formed, the benefit of their invaluable experience.

OSSIA TRILLING, TED WILLIS
Joint Hon. Secretaries
British Theatre Conference

PALESTINE

SIR,—Many responsible Jews in this country and in Palestine will welcome the proposal which you made in your issue of February 28th, in connection with the present Palestine discussions at Lake Success, that "it will be a grave blunder (for the Jews) to refuse to negotiate." The unpreparedness of the governments of this country and the United States to assist in the fulfilment of the vote of the United Nations Assembly, the former by an attitude of "neutrality," and the latter by declining to implement the decision, confronts all those concerned with Palestine and its welfare with a situation of growing gravity.

The report of the Palestine Commission states that in the period November 30th, 1947, to February 1st, 1948, there were 869 killed and 1,909 wounded in Palestine. The outrage in Ben Jehuda Street, Jerusalem and the subsequent ghastly reprisal on the troop train show how the situation is worsening.

For thirty years England and Jews have lived in friendship in Palestine: now the position is that, amid suspicion and anger, British troops and Jewish defence forces are standing to. The happiest people are the Arabs, who hope for a British-Jewish struggle which may do irreparable harm to the cause of Britain and that of Jewry.

Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations, requires the Security Council to call upon the parties concerned "to seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, or other peaceful means of their own choice."

The Council has also the right to "recommend such terms of settlement as it may consider appropriate." (Article 37).

The leaders of the Jewish Agency and the Foreign Secretary are not without blame for the tragic situation in which we now find ourselves. The vacillations and changing policies of Great Russell Street and Downing Street must be now replaced at Lake Success by a firm resolve to find an early solution, based on mutual goodwill, to a problem which may otherwise set the Middle East in flames.

H. A. GOODMAN,
Editor, *The Jewish Weekly.*

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Dr. Joad's latest book bears the title *Decadence, a Philosophical Enquiry* (Faber, 12s. 6d.). It denounces modern civilisation for most of its characteristics, whether in belief, morality, art or politics; and it attributes these deplorable characteristics to one ultimate cause, disbelief in a supernatural order. Agreeably prejudiced, disagreeably repetitive, the book is no less lucid and lively than one would expect: I have spattered my copy with marks signifying delighted agreement, dubiety or disagreement. Dr. Joad gallops without a tremor over a vast variety of fields, and there is room here to discuss only a few of his propositions. There are many crucial passages, moreover, on which I should not presume to pronounce, for my mind is neither naturally nor by training adapted to metaphysics. At one point, for instance, the chess-opening named after Max Lange is said not to have been "invented" by him, but to have been already "there," prior to its discovery in his mind. Unluckily I cannot feel convinced that such hypotheses add to our knowledge, or are anything more than verbal. Other arguments, that seem to me of a similar character, are advanced by Dr. Joad in support of theism; and again they get no grip on my mind, such is its incompetence in metaphysics. My excuses for reviewing the book are that it is intended for the general reader, that I have read it with great interest, and that much of it is concerned with the arts, about which most experts in metaphysics know little more than I do about philosophy. (This is an instance of the specialisation that Dr. Joad condemns.)

Though I agree with most of his strictures on contemporary civilisation, I am not sure that he is happy in his choice of the word "decadence" to denote its character. This word has no exact meaning, and has been employed more often than not as a vague term of abuse, a pejorative form of "unusual" or "unfamiliar." Thus the innovations of the more inventive writers, painters and musicians of the last seventy years have at first usually been called "decadent" by those who are shocked by whatever they are not accustomed to. The fourth century B.C. in Greece and the fourth century A.D. in Rome are cited by Dr. Joad as so-called decadent ages. But so is the eighteenth century in France, which seems to me to have little in common with these: though it showed a gross inefficiency in administration, it was exceptionally vigorous intellectually. Dr. Joad points out that decadent ages are often more agreeable than others to live in (in this respect at least our age is the reverse of decadent!); and he goes on to say that the quest and cultivation of pleasure have been a characteristic of so-called decadent ages and decadent persons. All men at all times have sought pleasure in one sense of the word. (It may be argued indeed that it is impossible for anyone to perform any act unless the alternative to performing it appears to him less pleasurable.) But pleasure in its more usual sense has nowadays become sadly discredited, at any rate among intellectuals, artists and politicians. I think for my part that it is most important to rehabilitate the notion of pleasure; and Dr. Joad would probably agree, for he justly complains that in no other age have the pleasure-producing arts been so neglected as in our own. The two earlier of the three civilisations instanced above as decadent were close to overthrow by more barbarous types of society; and in this respect—though in few others—modern Western civilisation resembles them.

Dr. Joad proposes a new explanation of "decadence," an explanation that he has evolved to cover the qualities he most deplores in his environment. And here he drags me back into the metaphysical conceptions of which I am so shy. Decadence, he maintains, is chiefly manifested in (*a*) "the subjectivist analysis of moral, religious, aesthetic and scientific judgments according to which the mind, when judging and thinking, makes contact not with external 'objects' but only with the projections of its own activity"; and in (*b*) a consequent refusal to acknowledge what Dr. Joad calls "the object"—which is "the manifestation of the realm of value in the world of everyday life."

Some of the instances he gives of contemporary contempt for values must now be mentioned. The influences of the age are in a pre-eminent degree hostile to all experiences that can be called spiritual, including the arts, disinterested learning, philosophy, religion and the response to natural beauty. Means are mistaken for ends, and experience is valued for its own sake, irrespective of quality. (Dr. Joad here indicts Pater, who never accepted so unaesthetic a view: he might have quoted Bentham, "Prejudice apart, the game of push-pin is of equal value with the arts and sciences of music and poetry.") Power is valued for its own sake, although it is "hard, if not impossible, to combine power with righteousness." Inventions are valued for their own sake, irrespective of the purposes they serve. Speed is valued for its own sake. Planning is valued for its own sake:

> It is thought sufficient that the industrial machine should run smoothly and that production should be high irrespective of the nature of the goods produced, or the way in which the goods are used, just as it is thought sufficient that the State should be efficiently administered irrespective of the kind of life it offers its citizens or its success in equipping them to lead a *good* life . . .

Modern man diminishingly acts as a responsible individual. Communities are too large, activities within them too specialised. While it would be conceded that a man who lay in bed till his muscles atrophied was a mutilated being,

> What is not so willingly recognised is that the same is true in its degree of the specialised activity of a man permanently concerned with the narrow range of intellectual interests of the scientist, who has no interest outside his science and exhibits the mentality of a child in politics, or of the politician who has no time for books or music or nature and, when it comes to reading, is content with a detective story, no less than of the accountant or the clerk who has never been anything but an accountant or a clerk, so that when his day's work is done he has no resource except to potter in the garden, tinker with the wireless, or take the wife to the cinema.

While our politicians do not concern themselves with philosophy, our philosophers seldom seek to enlighten either politicians or the public, consider indeed that it would be beneath their dignity to do so. This is only one further example of a specialisation that is destroying personality. Having evolved from the apes we are threatened with deteriorating into insect-like automata.

At the root of this whole wretched ramification Dr. Joad discovers a gross disregard of values. His reasoning seems less persuasive when he declares these values to be "non-natural," and conceivable only as a manifestation of Deity. He seems to hold that logic offers us only two possibilities: acceptance of his recently acquired Faith or denial of value to truth and goodness. But is it not possible to respect these values without supposing them to be "non-human" or "non-natural"? Nobody may have been able to explain them with a satisfactory definition, but there are many things unexplained in this unexplained universe; and one may without absurdity resign oneself to the belief that the ultimate meaning of beauty, as of the universe itself, is unknowable. On the other hand, it would be rash to deny that the prodigious increase in our knowledge of what is measurable may in some hundreds of thousands of years be followed by a similar increase in knowledge of what is, at any rate now, unmeasurable. That human beings should ever attain to more than a most fragmentary understanding of "the scheme of things" seems, however, unlikely.

Many of those who are most sceptical about this part of Dr. Joad's diagnosis will agree with his account of the symptoms and signs of the malady. He artfully varies philosophical considerations with scraps of autobiography and comments upon the most varied subjects. Sometimes he is careless in his phrasing; an innocent reader might gather from his book that Pascal was a priest, that James Thomson was in the habit of writing heroic couplets, that Gray never made the Grand Tour, and that Haydn's quartets did not represent a staggering revolution in musical form. With some of Dr. Joad's literary judgments I deeply disagree: I do not think that Proust's purpose was identical with either Stendhal's or Flaubert's, and therefore I cannot agree that he was a decadent writer "because he subsequently achieved a lower level in the same department." Again my intense admiration for Mr. Somerset Maugham's short stories does not prevent me from admiring also those of Katharine Mansfield (a most artful writer, here strangely rebuked for serving slices of life "raw"), and those of Miss Elizabeth Bowen. Chehov and Virginia Woolf are probably more dangerous models for other writers than Mr. Maugham; but every type of short story can be badly handled, and I see no reason for labelling one type as "decadent." Here Dr. Joad seems to lapse into that dislike of innovation which he denounces in the adversaries of Cézanne.

As is usual in philosophers and mathematicians, Dr. Joad's aesthetic preference in the arts goes to music, and to music of the more abstract and intellectual order. He attaches hardly any importance to mere beauty of sound as distinguished from pattern, which may explain his indifference to music written either before Bach or after Schubert. (He finds Debussy's music "grey," whereas I find it exceptionally brilliant and varied in colour—a contrast in response which is not cited as evidence for extreme subjectivism.) He confesses that he is unsympathetic to symbolism in literature, so that we learn without surprise that he has little taste for tragedy. Yet his attitude to the arts is deeply civilised.

Many worthy readers will be pained by his gloomy account of our culture. He seldom touches on such redeeming virtues as may be found in it. We English, for instance, have become a conspicuously gentle people, whereas foreign visitors in the Victorian age were appalled by our brutality. The indictment of our current philistinism, however, seems to me unanswerable. We have failed, failed beyond all reasonable expectation, to "educate our masters." When the Van Goghs at the Tate collected a queue such as hundreds of films do, it was thought a prodigy. Only a very small percentage take advantage of the "adult education" that is available; and the continuous increase in the secondary school population which has produced an army of admirable technicians, has failed to effect any noticeable improvement in taste. Dr. Joad believes that only an exiguous minority are congenitally capable of the effort required for appreciating any of the arts. I agree with him, but this is a question about which individual judgments, I have found, vary astonishingly; and a question that is seldom discussed, though of vast practical significance. It seems that most people are in fact bored by most good art: how should they not be, when to enjoy it demands training and concentration? Eighty-five per cent of listeners to the B.B.C. delight in cinema organs, only five per cent in string quarters. If similar statistics were available for the visual arts, they would be even more lugubrious. In the past the arts have, doubtless, been usually just as unpopular, but governing classes took expert advice, and the taste of the majority was not aggressive. Now we have "for the first time in history a vast industry devoted to both stimulating and satisfying the untrained tastes of the masses." In this respect, I may add, there is little distinction between capitalist and communist countries.

Dr. Joad offers few constructive suggestions and few hopes, except that God having created man for a purpose, "it is hard to see how a divine purpose could fail." Others may find some dim comfort in remembering that the collapse of ancient Roman civilisation did, very slowly, very wastefully, lead at last to the civilisation, hugely more valuable, which is now in turn upon its death-bed.

Raymond Mortimer

INDIAN ART

Indian Art. *Faber and Faber.* *7s. 6d.*

The Vertical Man. By W. G. ARCHER. *Allen and Unwin.* 15*s.*

Indian Art, consisting of four essays by experts (H. G. Rawlinson, K. de B. Codrington, J. V. S. Wilkinson and John Irwin), was published to synchronise with the current Indian Exhibition at Burlington House. Like that exhibition itself this book, though highly instructive, has its obvious gaps. The Burlington House collection could not, owing to brute circumstance, include the grander specimens of Indian sculpture such as are found embedded for ever in enormous rocks or temples and does not include (owing to what presumption about British prudery ?) those erotic imaginings which are not only characteristic of India but which at their best are beyond decent and indecent. In spite of these deficiencies the Exhibition has, one may hope, proved to the British public, if not to some of our professional critics, that Indian art need be neither incomprehensible nor repulsive. To be sure, one hears naive objections to gods having more than two arms—this from people who have always accepted archangels with two or more wings.

It is a pity that the Royal Academy did not devote one room to photographs of immovable masterpieces such as the sculptures of Ellora and Mahabalipuram and some of the great temples ; if Hindu architecture exists, as has often been stated, mainly as a ground for sculpture, that sculpture correspondingly cannot be fully appreciated without some idea of its architectural setting. It is also a pity that the catalogue on sale at Burlington House should have made no concessions to the public's ignorance. Why for example describe No. 463 merely as Nataraja ? Why not add that this means the cosmic dance of Siva ? This constipated erudition of the catalogue, excusable perhaps by lack of space, is repeated to some extent—where the excuse is not so obvious—in the book under review. Many of its readers, I feel, will hardly sense the values for the facts.

Facts about the background of art are normally preferable to gush about its essence but Indian works do perhaps call for some so-called "interpretative " criticism. Not that these works are particularly " difficult " for anyone who responds directly to mass and line in themselves ; to such people the better Indian sculptures must come as naturally as drinking—but how many such people are there ? If, as I think, the average intelligent person likes to have some " literary " clues to the visual arts, then he needs more clues than our four experts here will grant him. When so very foreign a people is expressing itself, a generalisation, even though unsound about what it is they are expressing, will be more stimulating to the uninformed reader than a pile of mere information. In contrast to *Indian Art* a recent number of *L'Amour de l'Art* does provide—and repeatedly—such a stimulus. Thus we find M. René Grousset of the Académie Française at once making a vivid, if (and because) arguable, point : " L'esthétique indienne réalise ce miracle . . . d'être à la fois toute volupté tropicale . . . et toute spiritualité." And we find M. Philippe Stern making an equally door-opening comparison (risky though such comparisons are) between the Ajanta wall-paintings, Sanskrit sentence-structure and the Gupta theatre.

Even so far as facts go, this book seems a little timid and narrow. The first essay for example, entitled *The Historical Background*, gives too much history—too many names and dates—and not enough *human* background. Without going the length of M. Stern, Professor Rawlinson could perhaps have thrown more light on Indian art if he had paid less attention to the chronicling of dynasties and more to that present or timeless India which shows itself in the luxuriance of grace-notes in music, in the intricacies of Hindu metaphysics, in the legends so fantastic yet so direct of the popular memory, and above all in the dance where a rigid tradition defines every gesture, yet in no way dams that supremely lyrical flow, a total impression which is nature based upon artifice. But within its limits Professor Rawlinson's essay is a useful anatomy of the bones behind the changing contours and colours. It is inevitably bitty ; the epithet " justly famous " tells us nothing about that staggering annunciation, the wall-paintings of Ajanta, while in two short paragraphs on the Pallavas he obviously could not even start to assess the special qualities of their sculpture—an idyllic blend of strength and delicacy to be paralleled in the pastoral legends of Krishna. It rested with the succeeding essayists to fill out this sketchy picture.

Up to a point they have done this ; Mr. Codrington particularly in writing of *The Minor Arts of India* does put some flesh upon the bones. He allows the traveller Bernier and the emperor Jahangir to speak for themselves and he properly stresses India's cultural unity and continuity—at least in her villages. He also mentions such little but significant practices as " the drawing of lucky designs before the thresholds "—an art new every morning but at times at least an art. Mr. John Irwin on *Indian Sculpture* struggles lucidly with an enormous subject but he too suffers from having too much to cover. Incidentally—and this is to his credit and healthy for the layman—he expresses some preferences with which the layman may differ. Thus he admires the lion-capital at Sarnath which to some people's taste is just a very ancient prop for a Corner House. And of the Mathura school of sculpture he remarks: " What does distinguish all the work is the very poor quality of its mottled red sandstone . . ." Yet several visitors to Burlington House have found that it is just the quality of this stone which makes these works, unlike the Amaravati limestones in the same room, immediately acceptable. Mr. Irwin refreshingly manages to see things both with an eye on the social factors behind them and with an eye on the things. He is very sound on the Kailasa temple at Ellora :

> There is no contradiction in the fact that this sculpture is at the same time an art conspicuous both for its conventional iconography and for its astonishing life-quality. . . . In such art, iconographical conventions are not to be confused with the *conception* of a work of art, they are no more than the *matter* of the conception.

Indian Painting, as Mr. Wilkinson says in his essay (with a fitting aspersion on Ruskin), " is a comparatively new discovery in Europe." He is confronted here with the enormous historical gap between the great sweeping murals of Ajanta and the just-so miniatures of comparatively recent times (neither group much resembling what we are used to in the West). Having conjectured his way across this gap and assuming " a real continuity," he properly avoids postulating another gap between the paintings of Hindus and Muslims. To represent life at all was an un-Muslim activity and, as he points out, the Moghuls employed many Hindu artists ; he is probably right when he maintains " that the Mughal painters, though they learned from Persia and the West, did not paint like Persians or Europeans, but like Indians." A political moral could be drawn here but Mr. Wilkinson, perhaps wisely, does not draw it. His essay is down-to-earth and includes not only pleasing information about Moghul pigments and brushes but also the striking remarks about painting made by the Emperor Akbar who felt that " a painter had quite peculiar means of recognising God."

Indian Art would have been the better for more plates ; in *The Vertical Man*, which admittedly is twice the price, the plates are half the battle. This is a fascinating study of a particular species of *primitive* Indian art. It is a book not only for art-lovers (some of these photographed stone or wooden idols have the impact of a strong dream) but also for anthropologists. Mr. Archer, who argues that sophisticated Indian art is " as little indicative of Indian sensibility as a whole as the cathedral styles are summaries of English sculpture," discusses in one chapter " the will to vital geometry " of the Indian villagers and then develops a careful analysis of a particular village ritual and the myth behind it. It is a good myth—the story of " the strong man who dies for love of the buffaloes." A little-known field to us where the buffaloes are so important ; but look for it next time you step out of Burlington House.

LOUIS MACNEICE

THE WAYS OF SCIENCE

On Understanding Science. By JAMES B. CONANT. *Oxford University Press.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The fact that few decisions on major policy can be taken without regard to the far-reaching part played by the applications of science, or to the likelihood that most of today's economic and social problems will in time be transformed by new scientific and technical knowledge, has become a commonplace. Nevertheless, " science " has not been assimilated into our western culture, nor can its vital significance be appreciated unless there is a much wider understanding of what it is, and how it develops. These considerations have led Dr. Conant, the President of Harvard, to use the Terry Lectures, a Yale Foundation, as a platform from which to expound a way in which he thinks a wide understanding of science could be achieved. What he proposes in his new book, which is an account of these lectures, is the organisation of university courses for non-scientists on the " tactics and strategy " of science, in which a few historical examples of the development of science would be expounded in detail, without of necessity entering into any philosophical discussions about the foundations of modern science or about the character of the external world. An immediate purpose of Dr. Conant's treatment is to contrast the laborious way the scientist usually extends the field of knowledge—pushing his way " through thickets of erroneous observations, misleading generalisations, inadequate formulations and unconscious prejudice "—with the simple, but in Dr. Conant's view grossly misleading picture of scientific method that has been painted by such writers as Karl Pearson—misleading because it implies that science is easy.

It is with such general issues that he deals in his opening essay. The two that follow give practical illustrations of the growth of scientific knowledge. The first is focussed on Robert Boyle's work, and covers the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century developments in the physics of gases, and the second deals with the early growth of knowledge about electricity and combustion. The final essay summarises Dr. Conant's general conclusions about scientific " tactics and strategy." These he groups under three heads : (1) " new concepts evolve from experiments or observations, and are fruitful of new experiments or observations ; " (2) " significant observations are the result of controlled experiment or observation ; the difficulties of experimentation must not be overlooked ; " (3) " new techniques arise as a result of experimentation and influence further experimentation." Under the first heading he remarks that new concepts may arise from systematic experiments or observations, or from consideration of difficulties inherent in an old concept, or from accidental discoveries, or from a series of successive approximations from older concepts ; and he emphasises the truism that a well-established concept may prove a barrier to the acceptance of a new and better one. Under the second heading, he refers to the difficulties of sound experimental work, and to the importance of measurement and quantitative analysis. Under the third he observes that new experimental techniques may have revolutionary implications, both in the field of pure and applied science, and that new techniques may develop from a practical art or from the social need to extend the application of an older technique.

There seems little in these conclusions that is likely to surprise either the scientist or the non-scientist, and while one hopes that American universities will adopt Dr. Conant's proposals and institute general courses on the " tactics and strategy" of science, it seems hardly likely that they will necessarily achieve his aim of extending significantly the sphere in which the operations and the promise of science are understood. In fact can this come about without an increasing application of the methods of scientific enquiry to fields of human activity where they are now unknown? Even beginners in scientific research are not expected to appreciate the rules of scientific enquiry except through direct experience. Their initiation into the practical methods of scientific exploration usually follows the empirical course of being gently launched on to a sea of scientific fact and theory, across which they are encouraged to feel a new way—the theoretical treatment of scientific method being left, as a rule, to the philosopher. Is it likely to be different in the case of the non-scientist?

Dr. Conant, however, tends to the view that scientific method, in the sense in which he defines it, has little application outside the confines of university departments of science, and it is obvious that his attitude is in part a reaction to the rash claims of some scientists that "so-called scientific method is applicable to the solution of almost all the problems of daily life in the modern world." But however much one may deplore such views, it is surely unnecessary to become ivory-towerish about scientific method, or to imply, for there is such an implication in Dr. Conant's exposition, that the principles of scientific enquiry are any worse a discipline for handling, say, the social and economic problems of to-day than are the non-scientific habits of thought, whatever they may be, that are now trained upon them. Obviously Dr. Conant is right in differentiating science from the rest of the field of cumulative knowledge by virtue of its "dynamic quality" (by which he means that new scientific concepts arise from experiment and observation, and that they in turn lead to further experiment and observation), but by so doing, he emphasises rather than helps to break down the barrier between science and other fields of human experience—a barrier which human history shows is nevertheless being continually breached. That this should be so is in no sense surprising, for Dr. Conant's conclusions about the character of scientific activity do not belong just to the laboratory, or to a strictly-defined field of social science—any more that the opposition to the development of new scientific ideas which he illustrates is different in kind from that which besets other fields of activity. Even less restrictive in application are the inductive methods of science, as opposed to the empirical and deductive processes which he illustrates in his lectures. When we leave the sphere of strict science, what matters about scientific method is that the training it provides in objective and in quantitative thinking is an immensely valuable discipline for dealing with chaotic social situations. "If properly understood," writes Dr. Conant, "an understanding of science strengthens those rational elements in our civic life which make for the adventurous yet orderly development of our free society." The validity of this proposition will only be demonstrated by the wider application of scientific discipline.

S. Zuckerman

A FINE PARTY

Turnstile I. Edited By V. S. Pritchett. *Turnstile Press.* 10s. 6d.

There have been in the past collections of reprints from periodicals, but not many: it is interesting to speculate on the kind of common quality that any such collections might have, if the contributions were confined, as here, to literary, non-political writings. What, for instance, would a volume of the *Edinburgh Review's* literary essays be like? That is simple: it would be Whiggish. Or the *Quarterly*? Simple again: it would be Tory. The *Gentleman's Magazine*? Largely about travel, and (in John Nichols's day) antiquities, and such gentlemanly topics. *Blackwood's*? Manly and dashing. The eighteenth-century *Spectator, Tatler* and *Guardian*? Gossipy, gracefully ironic social criticism and rapportage. The *Rambler* (Dr. Johnson's)? Rather heavyweight and even portentous in style; (Simpson's and Acton's)? Roman Catholic. The *Cornhill* (old style)? Upper middle class, traditional, cultivated, Smith Elderish. And so on and so on. In every case, a kind of homogeneity. So, no doubt, there would be about a volume of political or social contributions to the *New Statesman & Nation*. But *Turnstile I* is a literary miscellany; it contains poems, stories, essays, reviews. And they are freshingly heterogeneous; they have no common denominator; one can in no case say "That reads like a *New Statesman* story, essay, or poem." This variety of content, aim, style, authorship, makes for liveliness and independence; there is no clique atmosphere; indeed, some of the authors must look tepidly on the contributions of some of their colleagues. The list of names is reassuring in its variety as well as in its quality; they resemble one another neither in generation, politics, temper, style, or intellectual approach. There are here exquisite artists, blunt, straightforward non-stylists, gossips, sociologists, poets of all schools and none, critics, essayists, story-tellers; and nearly all, in their own line, eminent (surely a remarkable tribute to the magazine for which they wrote). Some come to us nostalgically, spell-binders from the past, like Virginia Woolf, Lytton Strachey, Roger Fry; and one must respect the editorship that includes these scholarly exquisites with the Chicago-hick-style of Peter Chamberlain's *What the Hell?*

It is not to be expected that most of these contributions should represent their authors at their best; space and time limitations, inseparable from journalism, cramp and restrict. But not always. Elizabeth Bowen's sketch of the two Irishwomen on the Dublin tram is, to my mind, this delightful writer at her best. But, to my mind, she is always best when recording the enchanting manners of human beings—preferably, perhaps, of feminine human beings of the Irish middle class. Or do I only think so from just having re-read this story? Is Raymond Mortimer at his best in his agreeable and erudite discourse on Anglican bishops? Emphatically, yes. Or do I only think so because I, too, am "one of the diminishing band who dearly love a bishop?" I think not. Mr. Mortimer moves, with the greatest relish, appreciation and grace, among the lawn sleeves, the rochets, of those whom John Milton (who did *not* dearly love a bishop) called "our swan-eating, canary-sucking, decimating prelates," whom he had decided should, after their decease, become "the trample and spurn of all the other damned." I look forward to the book Mr. Mortimer may one day, I hope, write on the Anglican Higher Clergy; he might well throw a few deans, canons, archdeacons and plump vicars also into his pot.

Does V. S. Pritchett show himself at his best in *The Invader*? It is a good, vivid sketch, told with economy and wit. All the same, I would myself rather have had one of his illuminating essays on writers, English or Russian; he might perhaps have allowed himself two contributions, a licence only given in this book to those who contribute both prose and verse. E. M. Forster, too. I am not sure which of his other *Abinger Harvest* essays first appeared in the *New Statesman & Nation;* but I could wish him represented here by something more characteristic than *Mrs. Grundy at the Parkers,* which I have never thought quite subtle enough for our subtlest ironic essayist. Logan Pearsall Smith? His *Last*

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HEINEMANN

Words, which appear here, are not in the same category as any of the *Trivia,* which I suppose were excluded by date; the dividing date-line is vague, but we do not go back to the days of Solomon Eagle and Desmond MacCarthy's editorship; the former, J. C. Squire, does not appear here at all, the latter contributes an admirable essay on Chekov. Stella Benson? Her *Wild Pygmies Afloat* is refreshingly free from the frisking whimsy which at times marred her work, so, though it lacks her poetic quality, too, it does show her at her near best. The poets? Well, here many of them (though not nearly all) are. Some have good verse here, some less good; some write better verse now, some less good; Again, all credit to the paper and to the editorship, for including in both paper and miscellany such variety. Here, for instance, is such moving traditional beauty as V. Sackville West's *December Night,* and W. J. Turner's *Venus Anadyomene,* side by side with such moving untraditional queer grace as Henry Reed's *Naming of Parts,* such agreeable zoological fantasy as G. W. Stonier's *God's Gargoyles,* such uncharacteristic lyric balladry as W. H. Auden's *Song,* the melodious melancholy of Sydney Keyes, the tropical sultriness of Roy Campbell among the Zulus. There is a beautiful de la Mare; no T. S. Eliot; in Cecil Day Lewis's *You That Love England* sounds the menacing revolutionary cry of the 'thirties:

> You shall be leaders when zero hour is signalled,
> Wielders of power and welders of a new world.

Zero hour, the new world, wielders of power—they are all a little discredited now; our poets have receded from them in horror, and now write, I think, better and profounder poetry.

There is little here from the martial years; most of it is from the other side of the chasm. And one of the most remarkable utterances is D. H. Lawrence's *Letter from Germany,* written in 1928:

> It looks as if the years were wheeling swiftly backwards, no more onwards. Like a spring that is broken and whirls swiftly back, so time seems to be whirling with mysterious swiftness to a sort of death. Whirling to the ghost of the old Middle Ages of Germany, then to the Roman days, then to the days of the silent forest and the dangerous, lurking barbarians.

How well Lawrence could write, when he thought, as he so loved to do, about barbarian darkness and destruction; and what a pageant of this he missed; he should have died hereafter.

I wish I had space to comment on many other of these contributions: on Rebecca West's acute assessment of Kipling, Desmond Shawe-Taylor's of Miss Compton Burnett, Robert Lynd's bland irony elbowed by the earnest sociology of Dr. Harry Roberts, Arthur Marshall's hilarious review of girls' school stories, and many more. This is certainly a miscellany. But, after all, I was wrong: there does seem in it one common quality; there is intelligence, of one kind or another. Not always so very much, but always some. There are assembled at this party most of our contemporary and near contemporary authors who are anybody, and just a few who scarcely, perhaps, are. Will the next twenty years provide so fine an assembly? It perhaps depends on "when zero hour is signalled."

ROSE MACAULAY

STONE

Oxford Stone. By W. J. ARKELL. *Faber.* 25s.

Who, looking at the grey cluster of Oxford University, is reminded of coral reefs growing in a tropical sea, or leaning against the city wall notices the remains of oyster beds or the spines of the sea-urchins that once moved through these warm waters? How few people lodged under a stone-tiled roof would lie in bed thinking of the remains of turtles, crocodiles and dinosaurs which might be overhead, to say nothing of the possible presence of a stray tooth from their earliest mammalian ancestor.

People who look at buildings with a knowledgeable eye are usually interested in their age and style and by whom and for whom they were built. These questions limit the range both of expertness and of evocative association. Here is a new field for knowledge and feeling alike. Mr. Arkell has doubled the parts of geologist and historian; he has studied the stones and the college account rolls and by a combination of the two forms of evidence has traced the origin of the material of almost all Oxford's stone buildings, ancient and modern.

Oxford stands on the line of Jurassic rocks that runs diagonally across England from Dorset to Yorkshire, and it is natural that its builders should have used the characteristic Jurassic limestones, first quarrying them near at hand, but ultimately going as far afield as Bath to the south-west and Rutlandshire to the north-east. These limestones, concretions of minute fragments of shell or sand often strewn with fossils, were deposited in a partially land-locked sea that covered most of England about one hundred and sixty million years ago.

It is illuminating to find that the mediaeval builders knew their rocks so well that they used the rough but nearly indestructible Coral Rag for their walling and the best hardstone, laid down in the open channels between the coral reefs, for coins, lintels, jambs and other mason's work. Many of their buildings still stand almost unweathered. When, however, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Renaissance architects demanded the finest ashlar for the whole of their large formal buildings, it seems that men had moved so far from the earth that they no longer possessed an intimate familiarity with the quality of the various stones. As a result many of the most important works of a great architectural age were raised in Headington freestone, another, but much softer, deposit from the reef channels. Oxford has paid for their ignorance, for the Renaissance pride and lack of contact with the countryside. Everyone knows the blisters and leprous scalings that have spoilt the many fine classical façades carried out in Headington and similar freestones, blurring pilaster, moulding and acanthus leaf.

Already by the end of the eighteenth century this lesson had been learnt, and Bath stone, then recently made famous by the Regency architects of the royal spa, was extensively used in Oxford after about 1820. Bath stone belongs to the Jurassic system and is therefore perfectly at home in Oxford, as is also the Rutland Clipsham that has been popular of late, but Victorian gothic revivalists were sometimes guilty of introducing rocks, such as Millstone Grit, from the more ancient Palaeozoic systems. These, with all the difference brought about by a hundred million years, seem alien and inharmonious.

In addition to his analysis of the stones, much of which is necessarily technical, Mr. Arkell has given an excellent account of the methods of quarrymen and masons. It is particularly charming to learn that it was the custom at Stonesfield, where the best roofing slabs were made, to call the villagers from their beds by ringing the church bells if the hard frost needed to split the slabs began unexpectedly during the night.

The author ends with a plea for a university architectural panel to advise both on restoration and new building. This is a digression from the main theme to which anyone might be goaded by the deplorably low architectural standards that continue to disgrace our older universities.

It has always been possible to stand in certain parts of Oxford and feel that one is alive in a Renaissance city. Books such as Mr. Arkell's so

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deepen the historical sense that one should be able to look up at the towers and pinnacles and see them as the branching corals of a curious reef exuded by the piety, the imagination, of a race of men.

JACQUETTA HAWKES

DEAD LETTER OFFICE

The Letters of Eric Gill. Edited by WALTER SHEWRING. *Cape.* 15*s.*

The imagination of Kafka might have invented the Dead Letter Office, its mortuary name, the remorseless and anonymous routine that leaves on our breakfast table, like a casket of ashes, the stray letter readdressed under some name which once, a long week ago, had the sound of tenderness but now fills us with shame and nausea—"Wolfie," 11, Boxgrove Road, S.W. But in a sense every man's letters have been sent astray, and one day, unless he is saved by his obscurity, they will come piling in to his executor's letter-box—a daunting, nefarious bundle. Any such accumulation of returned letters must have interest; yet who could have believed that the correspondence of Eric Gill would have produced, on the whole, so dull and unsurprising a volume? It is as if the Dead Letter Office had returned only the driest and the most formal communications, until we notice how spotted the letters are with the symbols of omission. Yes, we suspect Mr. Shewring of having done his work of editing too drastically, for surely the gusto and Rabelaisianism of Gill's autobiography must have had some reflection in his letters. In other ways Mr. Shewring has taken his task too lightly: no biographical sketch gives us a framework to the letters, which are often difficult to understand without reference to the autobiography, and the notes are hopelessly inadequate. Who but ardent readers of the weekly press will recognise T. & T. as *Time and Tide?*

No editor, of course, can quite destroy, in a volume of this size, the uncharitable fascination exercised by the unconscious disclosure. Unhappy the man whose letters are preserved as evidence against him. Gill, the sculptor, the letterer, the social revolutionary, the tertiary of St. Dominic, the conscious constructive thinker expressed himself more interestingly in the autobiography, but no man really lives on that visible plane. We construct a little and our designs fail: we take a line and abandon it: we are the prey of self-deceptions, of emotions gladly forgotten. If we write an autobiography we short-cut all those missing trails where our footprints have been lost in bog or stream: we construct a consistent character in place of that muddled, hampered, contradictory bundle of half-realised feelings, a kind of Boyg, that drifts like a dangerous fog through other people's lives. When the Dead Letter Office returns the correspondence it would need a sharper and more unscrupulous editor than Mr. Shewring to hide the damp Boyg trail. Take one example: the attitude of Gill (who was 32 in 1914) to the first world war. The letters, facetious, complacent, evasive, with an extraordinary tactlessness addressed as they often were to men enduring the five years' trench war, need to be read in company with Sassoon's poems or Blunden's *Undertones of War,* and compared with the few blunt "characteristic" sentences allotted to the subject in the autobiography.

> Jan. 4, 1915. "For myself I cannot yet afford the luxury of soldiering tho. I wd. be glad enough to go . . . . I cant do the half and half business as some people can and work all day and drill in the evenings."
>
> March 31, 1915. "I have also put on the armour (ie Khaki) of home protection and go drilling and shooting—a mixture of fun and boredom. No doubt we look pretty foolish—but you never know and there is always the chance of our coming in useful."
>
> July 15, 1915. "Talk about active service why you chaps are having a blooming holiday compared with me—a strenuous holiday and one containing many exciting moments I dare say—thin red line of 'eroes and all that."
>
> May 29, 1916. "Of course I shall try and get off—no conscientious objections—none whatever—but it wd. be such a rotten mess up for all my work, nationally unimportant tho. it be, were I to be conscripted. I shall try the sole-head-of-business-with-three-children-solely-dependent-thereon lay I suppose." (In his autobiography he had written: "I didn't ask for exemption and I made no effort whatever to obtain it.")
>
> November 18, 1918. (After three months service as a lorry driver in England when his exemption appeals had failed.) "I am in the Army for religious as much as patriotic reasons."

This is the real interest of Gill's letters, as of all such collections: to watch the dead constructed character dissolve back into the shapeless human being living from hour to hour: "Wolfie" come home to roost.

GRAHAM GREENE

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FRANCO

Report from Spain. By EMMOTT JOHN HUGHES. *Latimer House.* 15*s.* net.

The book one really wants about Franco's Spain would carry the story on, in all its regional diversity, from the end of the civil war. Mr. Hughes' "Report" is very far from such an ideal. It contains less meat than Hamilton's *Appeasement's Child* which covered only the first three years of the regime. It is scrappy and poorly written. Nevertheless it does a useful job. Its author, yet another anti-Franco Catholic, was until recently press attaché at the American embassy in Madrid. He knows his Army, Church, and Falange, adds one more dossier to the mass of evidence against them, and gives a comprehensive picture of the unstable yet mutually dependent political collaboration that supports the Franco dictatorship. He is instructive about the history of the Falange and its relations with generals and bishops. His condemnation of the pro-Franco clergy—still the majority though not by any means such an overwhelming one as many people suppose—carries particular weight. He has made something of a special study of the Seguridad, Franco's Gestapo, which was inspected by Himmler in 1941 and given the benefit of the latest S.S. expertise. His calculation, based on a survey of the prisons in the Madrid province during 1946-47, is that the number of political prisoners still inside jails throughout Spain is not less than 150,000 and not more than 225,000. This excludes about an equal number of citizens enjoying "conditional liberty" which is something like what a mouse enjoys during cat-free intervals. Executions, and torture, go on, though not on such a scale as during the period immediately after the civil war when they contributed greatly to the acute man-power shortage among skilled workers.

None of this is exactly news to anyone who follows events in Spain but it all needs to be rubbed in hard just now when Franco and his

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Simon NOWELL-SMITH

Constable 12/6 n

friends are trying to sport a democratic mask in the hope of getting Marshall dollars. Unfortunately Mr. Hughes omits to point out just what a wastepipe for dollars the insane, Iberian gangster economy must be, with the swollen Army running the black market and the Falange running the syndicates. His survey of the opposition and the underground leads him to the conclusion that an indefinite continuance of the regime will simply mean Communism in the end, and he attempts to convert the State Department to active intervention by suggesting that Moscow is gloating over the ruinous prospect. The fact is that any prolongation of the Spanish sickness can only harm the rest of Europe. Like everyone who knows Franco's Spain, Mr. Hughes has no doubts about the feasibility of economic pressure (some figures for iron ore and copper exports would have been illuminating here) and not much fear of the risk of civil war. Unfortunately it appears that Franco's long-standing offer to lead the anti-Bolshevik crusade from the peninsula has now proved more than Washington can resist.

MAURICE RICHARDSON.

Anthology of the Home Counties. By J. D. MORTIMER. *Methuen.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Betjeman's name on the cover of J. D. Mortimer's *Anthology of the Home Counties* may lead one to expect some of the new literature of suburbia. But he has contributed only the introduction, and these verse and prose passages describe, not the café at the Odeon, but the times when wheat grew plentifully round London, and Uxbridge and Epsom were centres of gay social life. Such subjects as forests, rivers, gardens, travel, customs, people, epitaphs, ballads, rural economy are included in the many sections. But is there really so little literary reference after the middle of the 19th century? Those who feel that only Mr. Betjeman and Betjeman-trained readers can find poetry in modern Middlesex may be gratified by Cobbett's uncompromising: "All Middlesex is ugly" (1822). (Leigh Hunt at the same period found it a pleasing scene of trees and meadows.) It is Cobbett also who describes the girls of Wycombe as "somewhat larger featured and larger boned than those in Sussex, and not so fresh-coloured and bright-eyed, more like the girls of America, and that is saying quite as much as any reasonable woman can expect or wish for." This collection contains as much to please and as little to startle as a walk in rural Buckinghamshire on a Sunday afternoon in January.

Week-end Competitions

No. 943

Set by Thomas Smallbones

Competitors are asked to suppose that they are writing a detective novel with an original kind of detective in it. The usual prizes are offered for a 200-word extract beginning at the point when he is first introduced to the reader. Entries by March 23rd.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 940

Set by Denis O'Neill.

In Trollope's "Is He Popenjoy?" the Dean of Brotherton makes the following remark about the Albert Memorial:

> "I think it's the prettiest thing in London . . . one of the prettiest things in the world."

The usual prizes are offered for sets of three instances drawn from writers of the Victorian age (which, for this purpose, is taken as roughly 1840-1900) in which the educated taste of the nineteenth century differs from that of its successor.

Report by Denis O'Neill.

No novelist ever held a mirror to contemporary life more faithfully than Trollope, especially perhaps in his later novels. It is a hoary fallacy to assume an author's likes and dislikes from the views he attributes to his characters, but Trollope was not above allowing his preferences and prejudices to show through the even texture of his prose, and I have no doubt whatever that he approved of the Dean of Brotherton—even to the assault on the Marquis. It is legitimate to deduce that the Dean's views about the Albert Memorial were those of his creator.

This competition produced many fewer entries than I had expected, no doubt because very few of us are methodical readers. A number of competitors seemed to me to miss the point (for example, Brian Hill put in an extract from Butler's Notebooks criticising the prose of Pater and Matthew Arnold in terms with which few people nowadays would disagree). More than one entry included Stevenson's diatribe against electricity ("The word *electricity* now sounds the note of danger . . . Such a light as this should shine only on murders and public crime, or along the corridors of lunatic asylums, a horror to heighten horror."—Stevenson's "A Plea for Gas Lamps.")

Perhaps it was too much to expect that many sets of three extracts of uniform excellence should have been forthcoming. In fact, only one entrant, Guy Kendall, produced three quotations all of which rang the bell; unfortunately they were not originals, except in the sense of being products of his enterprising mind, and he must most regretfully be disqualified. I hope the editor will allow me space to quote one of them:

"Who does not regret Landseer now, whose lions looked like lions, and who took you shooting *real* stags on *real* heather." This has the authentic note for which I was looking and which has all too seldom been attained. I recommend a first prize of 2 gns. to Allan M. Laing (I wish I thought that I had fully understood his third selection) and prizes of half a guinea to Talaka, Brian Hill, T. E. Casson and Pithecus, each of whom sent in at least one cutting which made me chuckle.

I

"Mother doesn't like to see sables on schoolgirls," observed Maude Clare, "but she means to keep me in my nice mink till I graduate." E. Stuart Phelps, *Gypsy's Year at The Golden Crescent.* (1873).

II

"She has been teaching the boys such a delightful game; so much nicer than cricket, for I can play with them."

"And you really are learning croquet!" exclaimed innocent Grace; "well, it makes a beautiful ground."

"Croquet!" exclaimed poor Lady Temple, with startled eyes; "you don't really mean that it is croquet! O' Bessie, Bessie!" . . . Charlotte M. Yonge, *The Clever Woman of the Family.* (1865).

III

It is more needful that I should have sympathy connecting me with that vulgar citizen who weighs out my sugar in a vilely assorted cravat and waistcoat, than with *the handsomest rascal in red scarf and green feathers.* (My italics). *Adam Bede* (1859).

ALLAN M. LAING

"Thackeray settled like a meat-fly on whatever one had got for dinner, and made one sick of it."—Ruskin. *Fors Clavigera,* Letter XXXI. TALAKA

". . . the foulest, the vilest, the obscenest picture the world possesses—Titian's Venus . . . Without any question it was painted for a bagnio and it was probably refused because it was a trifle too strong."—Mark Twain. *A Tramp Abroad.* BRIAN HILL

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Appointments Vacant

None of the vacancies in these columns relates to a man between 18 and 50 inclusive or a woman between 18 and 40 inclusive unless he or she is excepted from the provision of the Control of Engagement Order, 1947, or the vacancy is for employment excepted from the provision of that Order.

UNIVERSITY College of Swansea. Council of the College invites applics. for post of Professor of French. Salary £1,450 p.a. Further partics. from Registrar, University College, Singleton Park, Swansea, by whom applics. must be received by April 17, 1948.

UNIVERSITY of Durham. King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Dept. of Education. Council of King's College invite applics. for post of Lecturer in Education. Candidates must be qualified to lecture in teaching of Arts subjects and a qualific. or an interest in Psychology will be recommendation. Salary scale rises by annual increment of £25 to max. of £850. Commencing sal. of successful applicant will be fixed at a point on that scale in accordance with his qualifics. and exp. Family allowance and F.S.S.U. Duties to commence in October. 10 copies of applic., together with names of 3 persons to whom reference may be made, to be submitted by March 31, to G. R. Hanson, Registrar of King's College, from whom further partics. may be obtained.

B.B.C. invites applics. for Assistant in Music Dept., Entertainment Division. Duties include building of orchestral music programmes and some responsibility for co-ordinating them. Sound professional musical knowl., particularly orchestral, essential. Some practical musical exp. valuable asset. Sal. is on grade rising by annual increments of £30 or £40 to a max. of £680 or £890 p.a., according to qualifics. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, Broadcasting Hse. W.1, marked "Music N. Stm.," within 7 days. For acknowl. enclose s.a.e.

SCOTTISH Home Department require a librarian at Marine Laboratory, Torry, Aberdeen; candidates should have had library training in cataloguing and indexing; a university degree and/or Associate Membership of Library Assoc. will be added qualifics. Library is purely biological and scientific and requires to be re-catalogued. Salary range with entry point according to qualifics. and exp. £400-£600, man; £340-£480, woman. Write, quoting G71/48A to M. of L. and National Service, Technical and Scientific Register, Room 669, York House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2, for application form, which must be returned completed by March 25.

BERKSHIRE Educ. Cttee. Evening Institute Superintendents. Applics. invited from suitably qualified men or women with exp. in Further Education for the posts of Supt. of Evening Institutes at Windsor, Maidenhead, Newbury and other Centres in the County. Supt. will be expected to devote the major portion of his or her time to development of Evening Institute, with additional teaching or organising in connection with Release Classes, or teaching in connection with schools in the County. Sal. will be at rate for Burnham Technical Assistants, according to age and service, plus £75 p.a. It is hoped that successful candidates will be able to take up their appointments as soon as possible after June 1. Applics., giving details of age, qualifics., and exp., and giving names of 3 refs., to Director of Education, Shire Hall, Reading, March 27.

ORGANISING Secretary wanted by Council of Management of Coram's Fields and the Harmsworth Memorial Playground. Age between 25 and 40. Exp. in social work among juveniles desirable, also in supervision of cleaners, etc. Must be good typist and thoroughly accustomed to office routine and accounts, paying staff and P.A.Y.E. Hrs. 10-6, alternate Sats. to 12.30. Sal. £300 to £400 accdg. to qualifications and exp. Applics. by post to Hon. Sec., The Lodge, Coram's Fields, 93 Guilford St. London, W.C.1.

WORLD-wide organisation has vacancy in Education Section, Publicity Department, for script writer for filmstrips and training films. Work would entail research and preparation of scripts, illustrating various aspects of industry, training, accident prevention, etc. Previous exp. essential. Age under 40. Pension Fund rights. Write Box ZE.392, Deacons Advertising, 36 Leadenhall St. E.C.3.

THE Young Men's Christian Association invite applics. from men between 21-30 of definite Christian exp. and with a desire to serve the Kingdom of God as Secretaries in the Y.M.C.A. Applicants must possess capacity for leadership, an enthusiasm to serve young men and a real sense of Christian vocation. They should have attained Matric. standard or its equiv., be prepared to serve in any part of the country, and have had some exp. in work with youth. Application in writing to Secy., Personnel Dept., Natl. Council of Y.M.C.As., 112 Great Russell St. London, W.C.1.

SECRETARY-Leader reqd. from April 1, 1948, for Y.W.C.A. Club, Imperial Rd. Exmouth. Excellent non-residential premises with Tennis Court. Salary £275 p.a. Applics. to Mrs. C. P. Tremlett, Chairman.

DIRECTOR of Music wanted in Sept. to be responsible for senior choral work, to teach piano, and to co-ordinate all the music of the school. Post is full-time, but residence not essential. Govt. Pension Scheme and new Burnham Scale plus allowance for special responsibility. Apply: Headmistress, Badminton School, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, giving age and full partics. of qualifics. and exp.

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